BENNETT, COLEMAN & CO. LTD. | Estd. 1838 | VOL. 43 NO. 61 BENGALURU | THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2026 | METRO | PAGES 26 | PRICE ₹6**

THE TIMES OF INDIA

INCLUDES 4 PAGES OF BANGALORE TIMES

INDIA'S LARGEST ENGLISH NEWSPAPER | To subscribe call 1800 1200 004 or visit subscribe.timesofindia.com

Jaishankar holds telephonic conversation with Russian foreign minister Sergey Lavrov, during which both exchange assessments on conflict in West Asia and review diplomatic efforts

An Air India Express Boeing 737 MAX plane, carrying 138 people, makes a hard landing at Phuket airport in Thailand, and its two nose wheels get detached, leaving the aircraft stuck on the runway for hours, say officials

UK PM Keir Starmer was warned that appointing an associate of convicted US sex offender Jeffrey Epstein as his envoy to Washington **carried a 'reputational risk'**, govt docus show, P 14

Rahul Dravid & VVS Laxman forged a series-defining partnership against Australia at Eden Gardens Test 25 yrs ago. **In an interview to TOI, Dravid looks back at the historic match and how the victory proved to be a turning point for Indian cricket**, P 16

Reliance to fund oil refinery in US; Trump calls it 'historic $300bn deal'

Construction Likely To Start In Q2 This Year

Reeba.Zachariah
@timesofindia.com

Mumbai: Reliance Industries (RIL) will bankroll the first new oil refinery project in the US in 50 years, marking one of its biggest overseas bets and a return to the American energy market after four years.

America First Refining (AFR), the startup developing the refinery at the Brownsville port in Texas, said it received a "nine-figure investment from a global supermajor at a 10-figure valuation" in Feb but did not name the investor. "For the first time in half a century, the US will build a new refinery designed specifically for American shale oil," said AFR chairman & founder John Calce.

US President Donald Trump, announcing the refinery project on his social media platform Truth Social, named RIL as the investor and called the investment by India's largest privately held energy company "tremendous".

This announcement comes after RIL exited the upstream oil and shale gas business in the US in 2021.

Construction of the 168,000-barrels-per-day shale oil refinery is expected to begin in the second quarter of this year.

EDIT PAGE: America's RIL Deal, India's Real Deal
▶Trump's billionaire diplomacy for oil tech, P 14

▶Stronger energy ties, P 11

TEXAS PROJECT FOR SHALE OIL

- Refinery's developer America First Refining said it had **'received a 9-figure investment from a global supermajor at a 10-figure valuation'** in Feb, without naming RIL
- Project expected to **offset $300 billion in the US-India trade deficit** through a 20-year product offtake agreement with RIL
- Industry experts say the investment could deepen India-US economic cooperation, expand RIL's international presence and potentially **open future moves into fuel distribution and retail in North America**

> THIS IS A HISTORIC $300 BILLION DEAL — THE BIGGEST IN US HISTORY... Thank you to our partners in India, and their largest privately held Energy Company, Reliance, for this tremendous Investment'
>
> —Donald Trump

No need to panic, we'll navigate: Modi on LPG

Trichy: PM Narendra Modi on Wednesday sought to calm concerns over LPG shortages in the country triggered by the West Asian conflict, stating that India would successfully navigate the situation, **reports V Srivatsal.**

Speaking at an NDA rally in Trichy, PM Modi asked people not to panic or pay attention to rumours, and appealed to them to believe only verified information.

He said the conflict has affected energy supply chains the world over but India would overcome the situation guided by the principle of "India First".

"Our govt always puts the interests of Indians above everything. Even this time, our approach will be the same. During the Covid pandemic, 140 crore Indians showed the world how mature our nation is. As a nation we will navigate every situation successfully," the PM said. He accused DMK of corruption and said NDA would oust the party in the polls.

Cooking gas prodn raised by 25%: Govt

Oil companies have ramped up LPG output by 25% to help bridge a part of the deficit due to deficient imports, govt said while cautioning against panic buying as "cylinders are being delivered in two-and-a-half days". Officials said states had been informed that there was enough LPG stock to meet requirement of domestic consumers. P 7

Motion for Speaker's removal defeated after fiery debate

New Delhi: Opposition's resolution for the removal of Speaker Om Birla was defeated in Lok Sabha with a voice vote on Wednesday following a two-day discussion that concluded with home minister Amit Shah's fiery counterattack, which especially targeted Rahul Gandhi. Shah slammed the bid to put the chair's "dignity" in the dock and asked opposition parties not to treat the House like a "mela" where anything goes, **reports Kumar Rakesh.**

Birla is set to return to his seat on Thursday — he had decided not to chair its proceedings from Feb 10 when 120 opposition MPs submitted their notice for his removal for allegedly partisan conduct. The discussion was marked by a robust debate as both sides tried to push their narratives, with opposition members attacking the govt for allegedly undermining institutions and muzzling their voice, and the ruling alliance attributing the rare motion against the Speaker to the frustration of its opponents over their electoral losses and the sense of privilege harboured by Congress's Gandhi family.

The division of votes on the motion could not take place as opposition MPs were in the well demanding Shah's apology over his use of an "unparliamentary" word. Protests continued, forcing BJP MP Jagdambika Pal, who was in the chair, to go for a voice vote. P 8

> It is not right to say he (Rahul) is not allowed to speak. He does not want to speak or he cannot speak in accordance with rules.. He has not participated even in the debate over the motion against the Speaker... Mic for those who do not follow rules should be cut off... Parliament is not a mela
>
> — Amit Shah

> Mr home minister, the issue for discussion is unconstitutional and anti-democratic conduct of the Speaker, not whether LoP Rahul Gandhi is in House. If BJP has an ounce of concern for democracy beyond lip service, they would give space to Speaker to carry out his duties impartially
>
> —K C Venugopal

Oppn gathers signatures for notice against CEC

The joint opposition stepped up its attack on CEC Gyanesh Kumar, as it gathered signatures from MPs to submit a notice piloted by TMC seeking a motion for the removal of Kumar to be introduced this week in both Houses of Parliament. This is the first time a notice will be given seeking the CEC's removal. The nearly half a dozen charges, say sources, range from partisan conduct of CEC to mass disenfranchisement of voters. MPs of all INDIA bloc parties and AAP have signed the letter, sources said. P 8

Infy campuses trim menu, shut live counters

Bengaluru: Employees at Infosys' Bengaluru campuses may have to forgo dosa cravings for a few days as disruptions in LPG supply force food courts to limit menu options and suspend live counters, **report Shilpa Phadnis and Veena Mani.**

Infosys has issued advisories to employees across its Bengaluru, Pune and Chennai development centres: **Bring food from home and avoid on-campus events.**

▶Takes effect today, P 11

Waste collected from 5k homes fuels Koramangala eatery amid LPG crunch

Hamsaveni.N@timesofindia.com

Bengaluru: As darshinis and eateries across Karnataka shut down or trim their menus due to the gas cylinder crunch, one eatery in Koramangala — an area with one of the country's highest restaurant densities — continues to operate unaffected, thanks to biogas generated from domestic waste.

Household waste from nearly 5,000 homes in the city is now helping fuel Empire Restaurant. Even as Karnataka grapples with LPG shortage in the wake of the West Asia turmoil, the restaurant is the biggest beneficiary of Koramangala biogas plant — a joint initiative by BBSWML, Saahas, and Carbon Masters. "We never thought household waste could come to our rescue," said a senior official of Greater Bengaluru Authority.

Among the eatery chain's 60 outlets, this is the only one currently insulated from the fuel shortage. For nearly four years now, around 80% of the restaurant's kitchen operations have been powered by biogas, produced mainly from household waste.

▶12 plants in city, P 4

PRASADA CUTBACK

- Govt-administered **temples may cut down on prasada**; Kukke, Kollur, MM Hills, Chamundeshwari **temples facing supply squeeze**
- **Banashankari temple in south Bengaluru suspends 'Anna Prasada'**; it serves up to 10k meals on 2 days, 4,000 rest of the week
- K'taka minister KH Muniyappa **for cutback on consumption**
- **Long queues, mostly by cabs,** at several CNG stations in city | P 3

India's Russian oil purchases up 45% in March

India's oil purchases from Russia have increased by nearly 45% in March, rising from around one million barrels a day (mbd) in Feb to 1.5 million bpd during the first 11 days of the month amid the West Asia conflict. With transit through the Strait of Hormuz disrupted, supplies from oil-rich West Asian countries have fallen drastically. P 7

▶India's buys have kept prices stable: Gor, P 7
▶India-bound ship hit; 20 rescued, 3 missing, P 8

IPL 2026 begins at B'luru stadium on March 28

Bengaluru: After 10 months of lull and suspense, it's back to business at M Chinnaswamy Stadium. Defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru will host Sunrisers Hyderabad in the IPL 2026 opener at the Bengaluru stadium on March 28 as the Indian cricket board announced the schedule for the first phase on Wednesday.

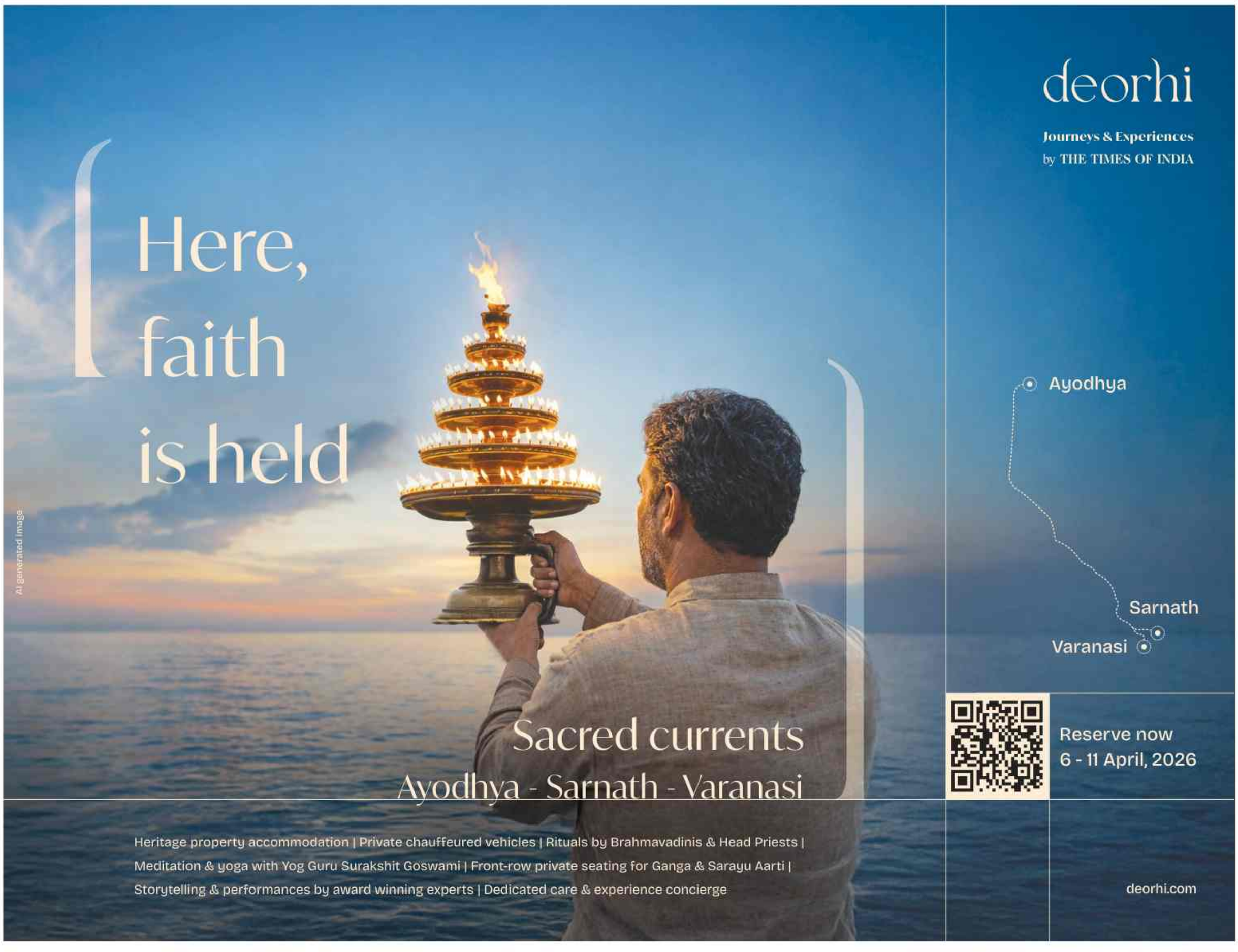
RCB will play four matches in the first phase. After the opener, RCB will host Chennai Super Kings on April 5 in the southern derby. Later, they will take on Rajasthan Royals in Guwahati on April 10 and Mumbai Indians in Mumbai on April 12. TNN

FRIDAY INSPECTION

- IPL matches in Bengaluru are **subject to clearance from expert panel** constituted by state govt
- The panel will hold a meeting & **inspect city stadium on Friday**
- **Full-scale mock demonstration of match-day arrangements** will be carried out Friday to assess the stadium's preparedness
- With three states scheduled to go to elections, **full schedule of IPL 2026 will be released once poll dates are announced**

Assam to drop ex-Prez's name from med college

Assam cabinet has cleared dropping former President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed's name from a govt medical college and renaming it Barpeta Medical College & Hospital. CM Himanta Biswa Sarma said the decision was to "avoid confusion", as many assumed the institution was private due to its name. Sarma said all other 15 govt medical colleges are named after geographical locations. Ahmed was India's 5th President and the only one so far from Assam. TNN


Here,
faith
is held
AI generated image
deorhi
Journeys & Experiences
by THE TIMES OF INDIA
Ayodhya
Sarnath
Varanasi
Sacred currents
Ayodhya - Sarnath - Varanasi
Heritage property accommodation | Private chauffeured vehicles | Rituals by Brahmavadinis & Head Priests |
Meditation & yoga with Yog Guru Surakshit Goswami | Front-row private seating for Ganga & Sarayu Aarti |
Storytelling & performances by award winning experts | Dedicated care & experience concierge
Reserve now
6 - 11 April, 2026
deorhi.com

TESSERACT

THE GEOMETRY OF TRUTH

PRODUCED BY

THE TIMES OF INDIA

AI Generated Image

The Stage Is Set!

Thank you, India, for an overwhelming response.
Now get ready to experience the truths that shaped every era.

A Theatrical Spectacle

Directed & Choreographed by Shiamak Davar | Starring Megan Murray & Pia Sutaria

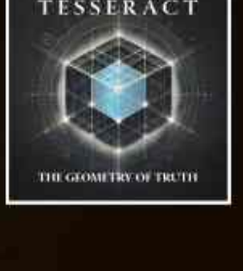
Best of Indian & Western talent | AR-driven visuals | Immersive soundscapes | 100+ live performers

Supported by

Reliance Industries Limited
Growth is Life

ADITYA BIRLA GROUP
A FORCE FOR GOOD

March 13-22, 2026
Jamshed Bhabha Theatre, NCPA, Mumbai



CONFLICT FALLOUT West Asia Crisis Throws Hospitality Sector Into Disarray | Pvt Cylinder Prices Soar Amid Panic Buying

IN THE HOT SPOT: Hoteliers struggle to retain employees as costs boil over

Credit: IANS, TOI, Chethan Shivakumar, Muthu P

BOILING POINT: Cooks resort to firewood for preparing food at functions in parts of Bengaluru amid a shortage of commercial LPG cylinders. The supply crunch, triggered by the ongoing war, has forced several hotels and restaurants to shut temporarily

Nithya.Mandyam
@timesofindia.com

Bengaluru: While the shortage of commercial LPG cylinders has already forced many eateries across Bengaluru to trim their menus or temporarily shut operations, hoteliers say an even bigger concern is looming: How to retain staff and continue paying salaries amid growing uncertainty.

Hotel and restaurant owners across the city say they are under increasing pressure to keep their workforce intact as rising costs and disrupted operations strain the hospitality sector.

A fast-food joint owner, who closed his restaurant in Chamarajpet Wednesday following shortage of cylinders, said: "We are not sure for how long the crisis will continue. Our biggest dilemma is whether to tell the chefs to go or to hold on to them. It appears like we landed in situation experienced during Covid times."

Subramanya Holla S, president of Bangalore Hotels' Association, said: "Retaining staff has become a huge issue. Temporary workers may not get salaries elsewhere, but here, we try to ensure everyone is paid. Even basic salaries start at around Rs 16,000–17,000, while specialised staff earn Rs 25,000–40,000, and some go up to Rs 75,000 depending on their skills."

According to him, salary commitments have become one of the biggest burdens for hotel managements during the crisis. "We still have to pay them. If we don't, the management suffers because many families depend on these jobs. We don't know how the situation will unfold, but we are trying to protect our staff," he said.

For individual hotel owners, the challenge is even more immediate. Deepak DN, who runs Hotel Aditya in Mahalakshmi Layout, said staffing is among the toughest aspects of running a hotel in the current situation. His establishment employs nearly 70–80 workers, most of whom rely entirely on the hotel for their income.

Hotels also carry the responsibility of feeding their employees. "Earlier, our focus was on feeding customers. Now, giving food to employees has become equally important," Deepak said, noting that many workers eat at the hotel and some even take food home for their families.

Like many establishments in the city, Hotel Aditya functions in multiple shifts — from 7am to 11am, 12pm to 4.30pm, and 7pm to 10.30pm — though these timings are constantly being adjusted depending on the availability of LPG and the overall situation.

Dependence on migrants

The hospitality sector's heavy dependence on migrant labour has further complicated matters. Deepak estimates that around 40% of his workforce is local, while nearly 60% comes from northern parts of India. "They cannot simply leave and go back home. They need to stay here and survive. Many are dependent on us for food and income," Deepak said.

Losing skilled workers a worry for many

Hoteliers also point out that losing skilled workers would hurt their businesses even after the crisis passes. Krishna Raj SP of Hotel Nisarga Grand said retaining experienced cooks is critical for any restaurant.

"Someone who specialises in making idlis cannot simply be replaced or let go, because that expertise draws customers. We need to ensure their jobs remain secure," he said. For workers, however, the uncertainty is equally worrying. Kumar Lingappa, an employee at a café in Jayanagar, said staff members are anxious about what lies ahead.

"We are trying our best to provide food to our customers, but our managers are working hard to protect our salaries and jobs. They said that if things do not improve, our salary might be reduced by Rs 2,000 to Rs 4,000, but they do not realise how big a challenge it will be for us. We are not sure what to do," he said.

Temple kitchens too feel LPG pinch; prasada distribution hit

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: At several shrines under the state muzrai department, kitchens are struggling to keep up with daily offerings. At Sri Banashankari temple in south Bengaluru, the city's wealthiest shrine, 'Anna Prasada' has been temporarily suspended.

Muzrai minister Ramalinga Reddy said Wednesday the issue was discussed in the assembly and that around 10–15 major temples across the state faced minor difficulties due to limited supply of LPG cylinders. Kukke Subrahmanya Temple in Dakshina Kannada — the state's richest — Kollur Mookambika Temple in Udupi district, MM Hills in Chamarajanagar and Chamundeshwari Temple in Mysuru have been affected.

"We discussed the disruption of prasada distribution at temples due to the LPG cylinder crisis. I informed temple managements to ensure that no inconvenience is caused to devotees," Reddy said, adding that devotees feel satisfied only when they receive prasada after offering prayers. Reddy said the current restrictions on LPG supply affected temples as well. "The govt stated that only one cylinder per month will be supplied. We have to plan accordingly, especially if the situation continues due to the ongoing war," he said.

The minister said most temples gradually shifted from traditional cooking methods to LPG and electricity over the past few years, making them dependent on gas supply for preparing prasada. "Earlier, there were alternatives like firewood. But now many temples rely on electricity and gas. Gobar gas is limited mostly to households," he said.

Reddy said the department asked temples to explore alternatives if the shortage persists. However, no decision was taken on reducing the quantity of prasada or adopting low-fuel cooking methods

Banashankari temple halts free distribution

ANI

Banashankari temple used to serve 3,000 to 4,000 meals a day

Running out of LPG in its kitchen, the management of Sri Banashankari Temple in Bengaluru temporarily halted its free 'Anna Prasada' service from Wednesday afternoon. The temple used to serve prasada to thousands of devotees, relying entirely on LPG cylinders for its kitchen operations.

"Normally, the temple serves 3,000 to 4,000 meals a day, and this number rises to 8,000 to 10,000 on Tuesdays and Fridays. The morning prasada consists of dishes such as pongal, puliyogare, or other rice preparations, while during afternoons, devotees are served rice sambar. On average, the temple kitchen requires about 40 to 50 cylinders per week," the minister said, while assuring that arrangements have been made to meet the demand until Friday.

Meanwhile, serving nearly 10,000 devotees a day, Kukke Sri Subrahmanya Temple has trimmed fuel-heavy items to curb consumption. "We've decided to take steps to reduce LPG usage. For breakfast, we will serve avalakki (beaten rice) more frequently and reduce the number of days we prepare padengi (green gram/moong), which requires longer cooking time," executive officer Aravinda Ayyappa Suthagundi told **TOI**.

PGs hit, tenants seek WFH option

Hamsaveni.N @timesofindia.com

Bengaluru: Commercial LPG shortage has begun affecting paying guest (PG) accommodations in the city's eastern IT corridor, prompting several tenants to seek work-from-home options amid fears of food shortage. Many migrant professionals staying in PGs say limited meals and uncertainty over cooking gas are making it difficult to manage daily life.

In areas such as Whitefield, Marathahalli and Ashwath Nagar — which house hundreds of migrant workers employed in tech parks and companies — PG owners say they are running out of LPG cylinders and being forced to reduce meal services. The Whitefield PG Owners' Welfare Association issued a notice to residents stating that lunch services will be suspended for a few days — starting March 13 — due to shortage of gas cylinders. A PG owner in Marathahalli, who is part of the association, said: "As of now, we have stock for the next two days. If the situation continues, we may have to ask some tenants to go back to their hometowns because managing food will become extremely difficult."

Ramesh (name changed), tenant in a PG in Ashwath Nagar, said residents have been informed about possible disruptions in meals. "Even in our office, they are taking note of employees who stay in PGs so that they can be given work-from-home options," he said. PG operators say they are struggling to secure gas cylinders from distributors. One owner said their dealer did not respond to calls for two days. "We have one cylinder left and are serving simple items like rice, upma and vermicelli to manage fuel consumption," an owner said.

Gas booking glitches leave residents anxious

Nithya.Mandyam
@timesofindia.com

Residents across the city reported difficulties in booking LPG cylinders Wednesday evening, with many saying both the customer care auto-refill system and online booking platforms were not functioning properly.

"We managed to book a cycliner Wednesday morning through the customer care auto-refill system. But since evening, I know many people who were unable to book gas and are asking around to see if anyone has a spare cylinder," said Anuradha Kamath, a resident of Uttarahalli. "I tried booking through an app and the website several times, but the system isn't responding. It looks like the app crashed," said Madhura Shetty, a resident of Banashankari.

Priya Narayananfrom JP Nagar, said many in her building were facing similar issues: "Normally, booking a refill online takes just a couple of minutes, but today (Wednesday) it simply isn't going through."

Operators hike prices

Some private gas agency operators said prices surged due to high demand and limited availability. "I normally charge Rs 1,150 for a 12kg cylinder, but with demand shooting up, I am now charging about Rs 2,200. People are still willing to buy," said Vasanth S, a private gas agency operator from Fraser Town.

Manjunath, an operator, said prices have almost doubled — from Rs 1,208 to Rs 2,115 — especially for new customers.

PTI

SOARING DEMAND: People wait at a gas agency for domestic LPG cylinders in Jayamahal Extension area

Drivers queue up at CNG stations

Several CNG stations Wednesday witnessed long queues of vehicles, particularly taxis, waiting to refill their tanks. However, distribution companies clarified there is no unusual surge in demand and that CNG supply remains smooth.

Shashikumar, a taxi driver, said there were concerns among drivers that like auto LPG, CNG prices could increase or supplies could be disrupted. "I did not face any difficulty in filling my tank. Unlike petrol and diesel pumps, CNG stations usually have long queues as refuelling takes more time. I hope there will be no supply disruptions in the coming days," he said.

Nithin, employee at a CNG station on Sir M Visvesvaraya Road, said supply remained normal and prices are the same. "At present, CNG costs Rs 90.10 per kg," he said.

An official from GAIL said queues at stations are common during weekdays. "Typically, from Tuesday to Thursday, stations see longer queues, while they reduce over the weekend. There is no significant surge in demand or disruption in supply. CNG and PNG distribution in the city remains normal," he said. GAIL operates 153 CNG stations in the city, and nearly 1.8 lakh vehicles run on the fuel.

Min invokes Shastri's call for restraint during crisis

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Food and civil supplies minister KH Muniyappa Wednesday assured the legislative assembly there will be no shortage in supply of domestic LPG cylinders even as reports of shortfalls triggered heated exchanges between Congress and opposition BJP members.

The debate began after reports that some hotels in Bengaluru had shut down due to shortage of commercial LPG cylinders. Recalling former Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri's appeal for restraint during the 1965 food crisis, Muniyappa said Shastri had asked citizens to skip one meal a week to conserve food and strengthen the country during difficult times. Muniyappa said the message remains relevant even today and urged people to use LPG judiciously during the current shortage.

In the assembly, Kunigal MLA HD Ranganath alleged domestic cylinders were being sold for Rs 2,000 and commercial cylinders for Rs 4,000 in the black market

Explaining the outcome of a meeting with oil companies earlier in the day, the minister said officials informed him there was adequate stock to supply one LPG cylinder per family once in every 28 days. He said sufficient supply is being ensured for hospitals, hostels and medicine-manufacturing units. At the same time, Muniyappa acknowledged there has been some disruption in supply of commercial LPG cylinders.

The issue was raised during zero hour by Kunigal MLA HD Ranganath, who alleged that black marketing had begun in Bengaluru. Ranganath claimed domestic cylinders were being sold for Rs 2,000 and commercial cylinders for Rs 4,000 in the black market. He blamed the Centre's foreign policy for the price rise, triggering protests from BJP MLAs.

IT-BT minister Priyank Kharge joined the debate and accused the Centre of creating panic among the public by invoking Essential Services Maintenance Act.

Chief minister Siddaramaiah backed Ranganath and Priyank and questioned why BJP members objected whenever the Centre's role in gas supply is mentioned.

Are you scrolling past a real connection?
Almost 46% people experience phubbing, which is when your significant other ignores you in favour of their phone. In the long run, this can cause lower relationship satisfaction and higher rates of depression.
In response to this important concern, The Times of India has partnered with leading institutions like IIT Delhi, NIMHANS, and CENABH for an initiative that will help provide credible, research-driven insights to foster a healthy digital balance in your life.
Scan the QR to take a scientific psychological assessment of your digital habits.
Would you like to register for a digital health workshop at your housing society? Email us at times.interact@timesofindia.com
Solution partners
INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY DELHI
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH & NEURO SCIENCES
CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE IN NEURODEGENERATION AND BRAIN HEALTH
LET'S D-STRESS
THE TIMES OF INDIA
CHANGE Begins Here
To get started with your copy of The Times of India, please call 1800 1200 004 or visit subscribe.timesofindia.com
VML.2607.2026

State's IT exports growing, to cross ₹5.5 lakh-crore this year: Priyank

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Karnataka's IT exports are expected to exceed Rs 5.5 lakh-crore this financial year, with the bulk originating from Bengaluru despite efforts to diversify across the state, IT-BT minister Priyank Kharge told the assembly Wednesday.

Replying to a question from BJP's Vedavyas Kamat, Priyank said the state's IT exports have consistently increased, and services exported cumulatively exceeded Rs 12 lakh-crore over the past three years (from FY 2022-23).

IN THE HOUSE

"In 2022-23, our IT-BT exports stood at Rs 3.5 lakh-crore, and it rose to Rs 4 lakh-crore in 2023-24," Priyank said. "Last year (2024-25), it increased to Rs 4.5 lakh-crore. I am 100% confident we will cross Rs 5.5 lakh-crore when the current year closes on March 31."

He said while Bengaluru contributes the bulk, other cities like Mysuru and Mangaluru are gradually aiding the sector's growth. "Of the Rs 5.5 lakh-crore, Mysuru city contributes around Rs 3,000 crore, while Mangaluru and the coastal region contribute around Rs 3,500 crore. Belagavi and Hubballi contribute between Rs 2,000 crore and Rs 2,500 crore. The rest comes from Bengaluru city," he said.

On demands from BJP members to set up IT parks in the coastal region, the minister said the govt was already working on it. In a subtle dig at BJP, he insisted a "conducive environment" was necessary. In Feb, the minister had claimed the coastal districts' perceived communal image — specifically its reputation as a "Hinduvta lab" — was deterring investors.

"Within a week or so, the criteria will be simplified," Priyank said. "We are also trying to introduce an Ocean Farming policy. This is an important cluster not only for the state but for the country. The potential is immense."

Priyank said the govt is treating Manipal, Udupi, and Mangaluru on the coast as a cluster and has brought them under the Economic Accelerator Programme. "Under the Beyond Bengaluru Cluster initiative, a seed fund of Rs 25 crore has been released," he said.

Highlighting regional economic disparities, Priyank said: "I want to bring it to the notice of the legislator that the district GDP of Bengaluru accounts for nearly 40%. The next closest is Mangaluru with 5.4%, and the third is 3.4%. Where is 40% and where is 5.4%? I honestly say that if we create a suitable environment for capital investment in that region, it can achieve around 3% growth in the next three years."

5 questions on ChatGPT require 500ml of water: Minister

TOI

WHAT IT TAKES: Priyank Kharge, IT-BT minister, replies to a question in the legislative assembly on Wednesday

IT-BT minister Priyank Kharge said the govt would review its data centre policy, which was introduced three years ago and align it with recent developments in the sector. He said Karnataka is ranked first in the IT sector but stood fifth with data centres. He said 32 data centres are currently operating privately in Karnataka.

"Data centres require huge supply of water and power which makes the coastal region ideal for such projects," he said, adding that the state had written to the Centre seeking a subsea cable for the region. He said the Centre has assured cooperation if private firms come forward to establish it.

Responding to criticism that Google had picked Visakhapatnam over Bengaluru for a data centre project, Priyank said the neighbouring state had offered substantial subsidies. "No one speaks about the cost at which it has gone there. The AP govt has provided a subsidy of Rs 22,000 crore for the project. The number of jobs being generated is only about 1,500," he said.

Explaining the scale of resources required for data centres, he said: "A 1Mw data centre requires around Rs 70 crore and one acre of land. It also needs about 25 million litres of water every year," he said. "If one asks five questions on ChatGPT, about 500ml of water is consumed. That is the scale of consumption."

Moves afoot to scrap toll for motorcyclists on NICE Road

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: The govt is considering scrapping toll for two-wheelers on NICE Road and will take a call after a cabinet subcommittee, set up to review toll rates on the corridor, submits its final report.

The issue was raised by Congress' Ramojigowda in the council, who urged the govt to intervene and stop toll collection from two-wheeler riders. Arguing that the toll was unfair for bikers, he said most of them use the road daily and should not be burdened with high charges. "The toll collected by NICE is steep," Ramojigowda said.

He also said farmers who gave land for the project are yet to receive compensation and that the proposed township under the project had not been developed. He claimed the agreement period between the govt and the company is nearing completion even though several project conditions remain unfulfilled.

TOI

WORK IN PROGRESS: Minister Satish Jarkiholi in the council

In reply, public works minister Satish Jarkiholi said consultants have been appointed through a tender process to study the company's investment in constructing the road, the extent of land acquired for the project and revenue generated through toll collection since 2008. The minister said the govt was also exploring measures to improve safety.

Jarkiholi added that discussions are underway to install AI-based surveillance cameras, like those used on Bengaluru–Mysuru Expressway, to curb over-speeding and reduce accidents. AI cameras have already been installed at two of the 40 identified locations along the NICE Road, the minister said.

SHORT TAKES

2,129 new startups created 2.5L jobs: Priyank

While replying to a question from BJP's Vedavyas Kamat in the assembly, IT-BT minister Priyank Kharge revealed 2,129 companies and startups were launched in Karnataka over the past three years, generating around 2.5 lakh jobs. Priyank said: "In the past three years, my department has signed about five agreements related to the IT sector, 13 agreements related to the BT sector and tripartite agreements with about 475 startups. Under the Rajiv Gandhi Entrepreneurship programme, tripartite agreements have been signed with 60 innovators. Besides, bilateral agreements have been signed with four women entrepreneurship organisations and tripartite agreements with 27 startups under the Grassroots Innovation programme." He said under the Elevate programme, grant of Rs 1,970 lakh was provided to 90 startups in coastal districts.

Multi-storey housing for ex-servicemen in B'luru

Revenue minister Krishna Byre Gowda said the govt is considering constructing multi-storey residences through Rajiv Gandhi Housing Corporation for retired ex-servicemen. Replying to a question from DT Srinivas in the council, Byre Gowda said 38 acres and 33 guntas in Gantiganahalli village under Yelahanka taluk had earlier been handed over to the corporation under the Ashraya scheme. He said group houses had already been built on 15 acres and 15 guntas for ex-servicemen. Only 4 acres and 18 guntas remain, where multi-storey housing could be developed. The minister said Bengaluru Urban district has no provision to allot sites to ex-servicemen families.

Rs 2k-crore plan to rebuild bridges

The govt has extended in-principle approval to repair bridges and construct footbridges on roads under the public works department at an estimated cost of Rs 2,000 crore, minister Satish Jarkiholi said. Replying to a question from Ivan D'Souza in the council, Jarkiholi said 15 bridges on state highways on major roads in coastal districts were identified as suitable only for light vehicles. He said action would be taken in coordination with district authorities after seeking reports from deputy commissioners on cases of sand extraction beneath bridges in the coastal belt.

Revise guidance value periodically: Byre Gowda

Revenue minister Krishna Byre Gowda said periodic revision of land guidance values was necessary to prevent illegal transactions and ensure fair compensation to farmers during land acquisition. Replying to a question in the council from BJP's KS Naveen, who asked if compensating farmers based on pre-2019 guidance values was causing losses to landowners, Gowda admitted large gaps between guidance values and market prices were causing irregularities. Highlighting the disparity between official and market rates, he said: "In some places, if the guidance value is Rs 2 lakh, the market price is Rs 70-80 lakh. This leads to exchange of black money. Revision of guidance value is the solution to prevent illegal transactions."

Cong MLAs want ₹100cr for seat devpt

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Legislators, at a late-evening Congress Legislature Party (CLP) meeting in Bengaluru Wednesday, demanded an increase in funds allocated for constituency development work.

Sources say MLAs and MLCs urged chief minister Siddaramaiah to raise allocation to at least Rs 100 crore per constituency, compared with Rs 50 crore the previous fiscal year.

"Considering general elections will be coming in 2028 and local body polls are also on the anvil, we urged the CM for additional Rs 100 crore per seat," said an MLA.

Sources say Siddaramaiah assured legislators that a higher allocation could be considered depending on revenue collection during the first quarter of the fiscal.

The CM also reportedly expressed displeasure over the absence of some cabinet colleagues at the CLP meeting, and their relatively low presence in the legislature.

"The CM said reports on ministers' performance will go to AICC and they will have to deal with the situation," said legislators, hinting at a possible cabinet reshuffle.

Separately, Bangarpet MLA SN Narayanswamy is said to have walked out of the meeting in protest. Sources say he raised slogans against revenue minister Krishna Byre Gowda and department secretary Rajendra Kumar Kataria over an issue related to land for a proposed golf resort.

Fin panel urges caution on guarantees spending

Bengaluru: The 5th State Finance Commission for the 2026-30 period has asked the govt to tread cautiously on continuation of the five guarantee schemes, while stressing the need to mobilise additional resources.

In its 542-page report tabled in the assembly Tuesday, the panel said the guarantee schemes are "expected to ensure adequate provision to meet basic requirements and empower marginalised sections of society".

With an estimated allocation of Rs 51,034 crore for 2025-26, the largest share going to Gruha Lakshmi scheme, the commission, headed by former MP C Narayanaswamy, nonetheless urged financial caution.

"Though continuation of the guarantee schemes is necessary to provide basic universal income to all needy people as well as to empower women, it is imperative to mobilise additional resources and also increase own source revenue," the report states.

The commission noted that while increased consumption from such welfare spending can have a multiplier effect on demand, income and employment, it must be supported by expansion in supply of goods and services. It said productive capacity needs to grow alongside adequate investments to sustain the benefits of higher consumption.

Separately, the panel recommended increasing the share of rural local self-govts to 45% and that of urban local self-govts to 15%, taking the total share of local bodies to 60% of the state's non-loan net own revenue receipts.

Of the 45% allocation for rural local self-govts, the commission proposed that the largest share should go to taluk panchayats at 64%, followed by 26% to zilla panchayats and 8% to gram panchayats for 2026-30. TNN

ORR congestion tax mooted

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: The 5th State Finance Commission has recommended a congestion tax on Bengaluru's Outer Ring Road and other busy carriageways, citing the potential to both raise revenue and reduce traffic snarls.

TOI

TWIN AIMS: The 5th State Finance Commission says a congestion tax on busy carriageways will help raise revenue and reduce traffic snarls

In its report on the five corporations in the Greater Bangalore Area (GBA), the commission said the five corporations must try innovative methods to boost its own revenue, with congestion pricing emerging as a key proposal. The panel noted that the concept was first implemented in London in 2003. The report says the tax could be implemented using Fastag technology.

The commission also suggested imposing charges on "selective types" of vehicles that significantly contribute to congestion. It added that the funds collected should be reinvested in improving urban mobility such as public transport and road improvements.

The commission also proposed green financing through carbon credits as another potential revenue source. "GBA area already has several 'eligible' initiatives such as its waste-to-value parks and Miyawaki urban forests," the commission said. The panel also asked authorities to study the Indore carbon credit aggregator model as a possible template. "Waste-to-value parks and Miyawaki urban forests can be registered to earn credits," it noted.

The commission recommended that the revenue earned from trading carbon credits be channelled into infrastructure projects such as electric vehicle charging networks and water resilience programmes. At the same time, the report suggested that the GBA explore raising funds through municipal or green bonds.

Recalling that Bengaluru issued India's first municipal bond in 1997 and raised Rs 125 crore for infrastructure, the commission said the city could leverage this legacy to mobilise new resources. "These will promote citizen partnership and involvement in infrastructure projects. It will also diversify the funding sources. The central govt budget also incentivises financing through the issue of municipal bonds with as much as Rs 100 crore as incentive for single bond issuance of more than Rs 1,000 crore by a municipal corporation," the commission recommended.

The panel noted that the financial strategies adopted in Greater London were of particular interest, describing them as innovative approaches to strengthening city revenues.

City has 12 biogas plants, but only 6 operational

▶ Continued from page 1

Shakir Haq, CEO of the eatery chain, said early adoption of biogas has proved to be invaluable. "Since it is a direct supply line, we are not facing the disruptions that we are seeing with LPG cylinders. In fact, looking at the current situation, I regret not having pushed this model across more outlets," he added.

"We are now looking at a dual-fuel system, so we are not completely dependent on LPG. We will bulk-cook at the Koramangala outlet and see if we can keep the chain running, even with 10% of the menu," Haq further said.

Explaining the scale of operations at the biogas plant, Carbon Masters co-founder and CEO Som Narayan said the plant converts wet waste into cooking fuel in a simple but effective process.

"Around 25-30 kg of biogas can be produced by processing one tonne of waste. Currently, Empire Koramangala consumes about 150kg of biogas daily," he said. They say every cloud has a silver lining. The LPG crisis has drawn renewed attention to Bengaluru's biogas plants, which have long remained low on the civic agency's priority list.

Chetan Shivakumar

NO CRISIS HERE: Empire Hotel at Koramangala runs on biogas, while several other restaurants in the city changed menus due to LPG shortage

According to BSWML, the city has 12 biogas plants with a daily production capacity of five tonnes, though only six of those are operational — the output used mainly for streetlights.

Panel: Consider tieup with payment apps

▶ Continued from page 1

Explaining the rationale behind EMIs, the commission noted: "A lumpsum payment each year might be difficult to manage. Splitting it into monthly payments might make it easier to pay which also softens the impact."

To simplify digital payments, the commission suggested that GBA tie up with payment apps to reduce the number of steps required for online transactions. At present, GBA does not provide an option to convert property tax payments into EMIs. Taxpayers can avail of EMIs offered by banks while making payments through credit cards or net banking.

Average property tax for residential properties ranges between Re 1 and Rs 2.5 per sqft, along with a 24% cess for self-occupied homes. Commercial properties are taxed between Rs 5 and Rs 12 per sqft depending on the zonal guidance value classified from A to F.

Referring to similar initiatives elsewhere, the commission said: "Rebates for timely payments, similar to 5% followed by BBMP in the recent past, can also incentivise people to pay on time."

Citing examples from Delhi and Pune, where one-time amnesty schemes allowed property owners to voluntarily disclose assets and bring them under the tax net, the commission said such a model could be adopted in Bengaluru too.

Lakkundi excavation ends, report on antique jewellery age likely this week

Basavaraj.Kattimani
@timesofindia.com

Hubballi: The excavation taken up by the state archaeological department, in collaboration with Gadag district administration and Lakkundi Heritage Area Development Authority, concluded Wednesday.

A treasure-expert team set up by the govt after antique jewellery was found during house construction in Lakkundi on Jan 9, is expected to submit its final report to the district administration in the next 2-3 days.

Sources said 462g of antique jewellery found in Lakkundi was used to adorn temple deities. Initial reports suggested it was 500 years old, while some estimates placed it at 800 years old.

Lakkundi drew widespread attention after the discovery of jewellery. Coincidentally, the state archaeological department resumed its excavation — halted last year due to rain — on Jan 9, around the same time the jewellery surfaced.

TOI

TREASURE TROVE: The site at Lakkundi, Gadag, where digging was conducted

Authorities maintained the excavation had nothing to do with the discovery, though some people and officials hoped for more gold or other precious metals. None was found.

Shejeshwara R, director of the archaeological department, told **TOI** the excavation began at a 10x10-metre site opposite Kote Veerabhadreshwar temple. The site was divided into four 2.5-metre blocks.

Over more than two months, the team unearthed an Adishesha with seven hoods, stone inscriptions, a donor (daanashastra) slab, Dwarapalaka sculptures, decorative stone fragments and distinctive sculptural patterns, including rare carvings of dance poses and ornamental designs.

A donor inscription is estimated to date to around the 12th century. Based on stylistic analysis, the findings are believed to belong to Kalyana Chalukya, Hoysala and Badami Chalukya periods. Human skeletal remains were also recovered. Most artefacts belonged to these three periods, he said.

"We dug up 9–10 ft and reached the natural soil level. We also dismantled the remaining 50cm path between the four blocks, where we discovered a fort wall between Veerabhadra temple and Pushkarni," he said.

TIMES TRIBUTE
PAYING HOMAGE TO THE DEPARTED SOUL

To book your ad | Logon to: ads.timesofindia.com or Call: 18001205474 (Toll Free) | Scan QR Code

BOOK OBITUARY ADS
To book an Obituary Ad Please contact:
Bharat
7760833522
TO BOOK ONLINE LOG ON TO
Ads.timesofindia.com
EXCLUSIVE OFFERS AND ASSISTANCE
SCAN TO BOOK

OBITUARY
SAD DEMISE

In loving memory of

Meenu Rajpal
04.07.1949 - 09.03.2026
Chautha on Thursday, 12.03.2026, 5- 5:30 pm at Sindhi High School, Kumara Krupa road Bangalore-560001.
A loving Mother & Grandmother
Deeply mourned by
Ravi & Bindi Rajpal & Dr Kiran KingerRohan, Ria, Tanya, Ryka, Rohaana Rajpal & Hinduja family
Mob: 9901679860

OBITUARY
DEATH ANNIVERSARY

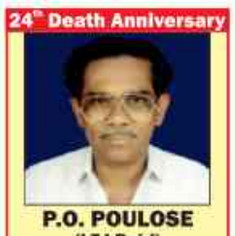
1ST YEAR REMEMBRANCE

JOSITTA JOLLY (Jessy)
DOB : 29-12-1953 - DOD : 12-03-2025
One year has passed since our beloved mother was called home to the Lord, yet not a day goes by without her presence being felt in our hearts
Though time has moved on, her love and guidance remain with us every day. She is deeply missed, forever loved, and always remembered.
Fond remembrance
Son
Daughter-in-law
Grandchildren &
Family Members

20th ANNIVERSARY

Mrs. LACHMIBAI B. DADLANI
Who left us on 12/3/2006
"You live in our hearts always & for ever"
-Sons, Daughters, Daughter-in-laws, Son-in-laws & Grand Childrens & Family members
SILK MUSEUM, SAREE EMPORIUM & ST. MARK'S HOTEL BANGALORE

24th Death Anniversary



P.O. POULOSE
(I.T.I Retd)
"In the book of life you are our favourite chapter"
Fondly remembered by
Wife, Children, Grand Children and Great Grand Children

TO BOOK AN OBITUARY AD
PLEASE CALL
18001205474
(Toll Free)
TO BOOK ONLINE LOG ON TO
Ads.timesofindia.com
Scan QR Code

TO BOOK AN OBITUARY AD PLEASE CALL
18001205474
(Toll Free)
TO BOOK ONLINE LOG ON TO
Ads.timesofindia.com
EXCLUSIVE OFFERS AND ASSISTANCE
SCAN TO BOOK

TO BOOK AN OBITUARY AD PLEASE CALL
18001205474
(Toll Free)
TO BOOK ONLINE LOG ON TO
Ads.timesofindia.com

TO BOOK AN OBITUARY AD PLEASE CALL
18001205474
(Toll Free)
TO BOOK ONLINE LOG ON TO
Ads.timesofindia.com

BDA is a promoter, rules K-Rera tribunal

Authority Upholds Order On Registering NPKL; BDA To Approach High Court

Vindhya.Pabolu
@timesofindia.com

File photo

The K-Rera tribunal observed that BDA executes lease-cum-sale agreements with allottees, similar to agreements entered into by private promoters

Bengaluru: BDA is required to follow all the rules and regulations under Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, including registration of projects, as it falls within the definition of a promoter when it develops layouts and sells plots.

Karnataka Real Estate Appellate Tribunal made the observation in its March 3 judgment upholding an order of K-Rera on registering Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Layout (NPKL).

However, BDA officials told **TOI** they will approach the high court against the tribunal's order.

The case arose out of the order dated Nov 7, 2025, passed by K-Rera and complaints filed by allottees of NPKL project. K-Rera allowed the complaints and issued several directions to BDA, which challenged the order before the appellate tribunal.

In its order, the tribunal rejected BDA's preliminary objection that it lacked jurisdiction because BDA is a statutory planning authority. The tribunal held that NKPL is an ongoing real estate project requiring registration under K-Rera rules.

The tribunal, comprising judicial member Santosh Kumar Shetty and administrative member Mahendra Jain, referred to provisions of Rera Act and observed that the definition of "promoter" is inclusive and specifically covers development authorities and other public bodies that develop plots or construct buildings on land owned by them or placed at their disposal by the govt for sale to the public.

The tribunal concluded that BDA, when developing layouts, falls within the ambit of a promoter under the Act. It noted: "The definition therefore applies to all developers, whether private sector players or public sector entities, with a view to standardise accountability and enhance transparency across the real estate sector."

The tribunal also observed that BDA executes lease-cum-sale agreements with allottees similar to agreements entered into by private promoters, making both parties bound by the timelines and possession conditions mentioned in such agreements. It added that BDA must comply with Rera provisions relating to project registration, duties of promoters, and the rights of allottees under the Act.

The tribunal ordered that the appeal filed by BDA was dismissed at the stage of admission, holding that the provisions of the Act are squarely applicable to it. Consequently, the order dated Nov 7, 2025, passed by K-Rera was confirmed.

10,000 FAMILIES LEFT IN LURCH

NPKL, which was supposed to be completed by Dec 31, 2021, left more than 10,000 families in limbo. Spread across 4,043 acres in nine blocks between Mysuru Road and Magadi Road, the layout saw uneven progress. As of June 2025, as much as 93% o f the roads and drains were completed, while only 46% of the soil stabilisation work was done. In March 2025, the project was marked as 'lapsed' by Rera.

With diabetes, hypertension and lifestyle factors on the rise, kidney disease is becoming increasingly common in Bengaluru. On World Kidney Day, nephrologists explain the common conditions, key warning signs, and steps to keep your kidneys healthy

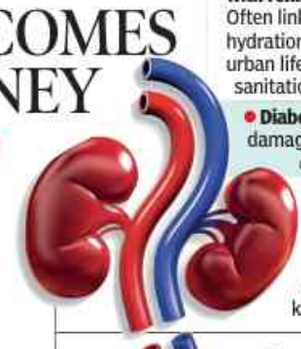
NO KIDDING WHEN IT COMES TO KIDNEY

What affects the organ

- **Diabetes:** The most common cause of kidney disease. Even with the best care, it can progressively worsen. It is characterised by protein in the urine and a decline in glomerular filtration rate (GFR), which measures how well the kidneys filter blood
- **Uncontrolled hypertension:** Kidney disease usually progresses slowly at first but can accelerate if blood pressure is not controlled

WORLD KIDNEY DAY

- **Overuse of painkillers or over-the-counter medications:** Prolonged use, especially among elderly, diabetics, or those with existing kidney disease, can lead to permanent kidney damage and, in severe cases, may even cause the kidneys to shrink
- **Heat:** Studies from high-temperature areas such as north Karnataka show that prolonged exposure to heat, especially among manual labourers working outdoors or in mines, can lead to kidney damage



Common kidney issues

- **Chronic kidney disease (CKD) -** Largely driven by high prevalence of diabetes and hypertension
- **Kidney stones (Nephrolithiasis) -** Caused by hard water supply, warm climate and dehydration
- **Urinary tract infections (UTIs) with renal involvement** Often linked to poor hydration, sedentary urban lifestyles and sanitation gaps
- **Diabetic nephropathy -** Kidney damage caused by long-standing diabetes
- **Hypertensive nephrosclerosis -** Caused by sustained high blood pressure, which gradually scars kidney tissue

Warning signs to look out for

- Persistent fatigue and low energy
- Swelling in legs, feet or around the eyes
- Noticeable changes in urination patterns
- Foamy, bubbly or bloody urine
- Persistent pain in lower back or sides
- Loss of appetite, nausea or a metallic taste in the mouth

Steps to prevent kidney issues

- Stay well-hydrated
- Monitor blood pressure and blood sugar levels regularly
- Use medications carefully and only under medical supervision
- Maintain balanced diet with less salt and processed foods, and include more fruit and vegetables
- Maintain healthy weight and active lifestyle

— Text by Jahnavi TR

Sources: Dr Manjunath S, senior consultant, nephrology, Fortis Hospitals; Dr Vishwanath S, HOD & consultant, nephrology, and transplant physician, Manipal Hospital; Dr Kristin George, consultant, nephrologist & renal transplant, Aster Whitefield Hospital; Dr Kishan A, consultant, nephrology, Aster CMI Hospital

Missed morning pick-up call? Dispose of garbage at night

Nithya.Mandyam
@timesofindia.com

Bengaluru: The city may soon see cleaner mornings as the civic agency has expanded night-time garbage collection in an effort to tackle one of its most-persistent challenges — overflowing waste and roadside dumping.

The initiative by Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited (BSWML) aims to introduce additional garbage collection rounds in select wards under Bengaluru South city corporation limits, with plans for a wider rollout if the pilot proves effective.

IN SOUTH B'LURU

BSWML chief executive officer Karee Gowda, said: "For years, residents complained about garbage piling up during the day due to delayed or missed pick-ups. Black spots have become a common sight. The night-time collection model is designed to plug gaps in the existing morning schedule and to avoid garbage piling up."

A senior BSWML official, added: "It can improve hygiene, overall appearance of neighbourhoods and help ease traffic disruptions caused by garbage trucks operating during peak morning hours, particularly in narrow streets and commercial areas."

Officials warned the expanded schedule shouldn't be interpreted as permission to dump garbage at any time of the day. Instead, residents will be informed about specific handover windows and designated collection points. Gowda said, "Residents must continue to segregate waste at source and hand it over only during designated timings. Without proper segregation, collection and processing become more difficult."

Residents flag waste burning in east B'luru and RR Nagar

Hamsaveni.N
@timesofindia.com

WHERE'S OUR CIVIC SENSE? 1,220 garbage-burning cases were registered on Sahaaya app between Aug 2025 and Jan 2026, of which 1,186 were marked as resolved

Bengaluru: Has garbage burning returned to Bengaluru? Residents across the city are raising fresh concerns about waste being burnt in daylight, leaving thick smoke lingering over residential neighbourhoods.

In areas under Bengaluru East city corporation, particularly in KR Pura, right behind the Greater Bengaluru Authority office, residents flagged continuous garbage burning near transfer stations. While it remains unclear whether the fires are deliberately lit or accidental, smoke has become a major concern.

Muniraj, a resident of KR Pura, told **TOI**, "Surely, the fire is not lighting by itself, someone is igniting it. While we don't get the smell, smoke enters our house easily. People with wheezing issues are affected. It seems like they are mostly burning plastic, leading to dense smoke. These burning incidents are happening very close to Gangashetty Lake; hence, daily walkers feel very uncomfortable."

Similar complaints were filed from RR Nagar. Kalpana Vishwanath, a resident, said, "It has become a routine thing here, especially burning of dry leaves. GBA should seriously think about handling fires and using a leaf shredder."

According to Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Ltd (BSWML), between Aug 2025 and Jan 2026, 1,220 garbage-burning cases were registered on Sahaaya app, of which 1,186 were marked as resolved. In Feb alone, 242 cases were reported, with 158 resolved so far. A BSWML official from East city corporation said after receiving complaints, he ensured there is no garbage burning in the area. He, however, added: "It gets difficult to identify who is burning garbage as it's mostly done early in the morning or late night."

EFFECTS OF HARMFUL GASES

Experts warn garbage burning in open spaces releases harmful pollutants such as fine particulate matter (PM2.5 and PM10), carbon monoxide and toxic chemicals like dioxins and furans — especially when plastic waste is involved. These pollutants can aggravate asthma, bronchitis and other respiratory illnesses, cause eye and throat irritation, and contribute significantly to urban air pollution. Prolonged exposure may also impact children, the elderly, and those with pre-existing health conditions.

PRACTICE PROHIBITED

Under Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016, open burning of solid waste is strictly prohibited. In Bengaluru, civic authorities can impose spot fines on individuals or agencies found burning waste. Repeated violations can attract higher penalties and legal action under municipal and environmental laws, and property owners or contractors may be held accountable if waste is burnt within their premises or due to improper waste handling.

Free bus rides for SSLC students

Students appearing for SSLC exam-1 can travel for free on BMTC buses from March 18 to April 2.

They can travel to examination centres upon producing their hall or admission tickets. BMTC said additional trips will be operated based on demand to ensure smooth travel. TNN

Drivers to get soft skill training to boost tourism

Jahnavi@timesofindia.com

Bengaluru: Taking the saying "first impression is the best impression" seriously, the state tourism department has decided to train the very first people most inbound tourists interact with — autorickshaws and taxi drivers — in soft skills.

The announcement was made in CM Siddaramaiah's recent budget speech, though the department worked on the plan for the past few months. The move came after repeated complaints from tourists, especially foreigners, about being overcharged or harassed by drivers, even in Bengaluru.

"The objective of this programme is to improve the first impression tourists carry about a destination or about our state in general. We want to improve visitors' experience

THRILOK CHANDRA KV | Secretary, tourism department

As part of the programme, drivers, tourist guides, porters, and even police personnel will be trained in basic soft skills such as greeting tourists, interacting politely and improving their communication skills. The govt earmarked Rs 1 crore for the programme.

"For drivers and porters, we will tie up with associations in different districts and design their modules. While the core skills will remain the same across districts, the training will be slightly customised depending on what tourists expect from that destination," Thrilok Chandra KV, secretary, tourism department, said.

The tourism department also plans to collaborate with the police department. "We will first understand the problems police usually face while dealing with tourists and then design solutions accordingly," he added.

Stakeholders in the tourism industry say such a programme is long overdue. "Even today, auto drivers charge Rs 200–Rs 300 for rides that should cost just Rs 60–Rs 70 from Majestic in Bengaluru," said Patrick George, president of the Karnataka Tourism Forum.

According to him, soft skills can make a significant difference to a visitor's experience. "Simple things like a clean-shaven driver at an airport or a well-presented guide at a tourist destination go a long way in making a good impression," he said.

However, he added, "The modules must be updated regularly, and drivers, porters and guides should undergo training repeatedly."

8 yrs on, Jalahalli Cross to see light at end of tunnel

Sanjay.Murty
@timesofindia.com

STRESS ON PLANNING: Residents welcome the decision to take up Jalahalli Cross underpass work but worry it could worsen traffic

Bengaluru: Jalahalli Cross, a major roadway for commuters entering Bengaluru via Tumakuru Road, has long been notorious for heavy traffic congestion.

A proposed underpass aimed at easing traffic flow at the busy intersection has remained on paper for nearly eight years, leaving commuters, pedestrians and residents frustrated.

The Jalahalli Cross underpass project was approved by the govt during 2017–18 under the CM Nagarotthana Scheme and was supposed to be implemented by the erstwhile Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP). To facilitate construction of the underpass, 48 properties were notified for acquisition. However, acquisition of 26 properties is still pending, leading to prolonged delays in taking up the project.

Following the formation of the Greater Bengaluru Authority and the creation of five new city corporations, the project has now been entrusted to the Bengaluru West city corporation. So far, around Rs 85.7 crore has been spent on land acquisition, while an additional Rs 53.6 crore is required to acquire the remaining properties. The civil construction cost of the underpass has been estimated at Rs 57.2 crore, taking the total project cost to nearly Rs 170 crore.

Residents who have long been waiting for the project welcomed the corporation's decision to take up the work soon but cautioned that further delays could worsen traffic conditions at the already congested junction. Nagarajan R, a long-time resident of the locality, stressed the need for proper planning before starting the project.

Another resident, Srinidhi Swaminathan, who lives near Jalahalli Cross, said, "If the project is executed well within the time frame, it will be helpful for residents. The existing road will be shrunk during construction. We are anxious that the work may go on for a long time and won't see timely completion."

Officials said the corporation is working towards beginning the project soon. The executive engineer of the Rajarajeshwari Nagar zone, SL Papareddy, said the corporation is currently awaiting funds to complete the remaining land acquisition. "We are planning to begin civil works by the end of next week and proceed with land acquisition in parallel. The project was recently handed over to the corporation from BBMP Major Roads. We are trying to expedite it and complete it in time," Papareddy added.

HC orders notice to authorities over self-LED ads

Bengaluru: The high court Wednesday ordered notice to the govt, Greater Bengaluru Authority as well as the five new city corporations, in response to a PIL concerning the display of self-LED advertisements across the city.

A division bench of Chief Justice Vibhu Bakhru and Justice CM Poonacha also ordered notice to city police, KSPCB, Bescom and others, while posting the petition to June 18 for further consideration. The petition was filed by K Laxmana, a retired DRDO official.

In 2018, following the directions issued in a PIL, the erstwhile BBMP council passed Outdoor Signage and Public Messaging Byelaws, which imposed a ban on commercial hoardings in Bengaluru. Despite this, BBMP/GBA granted permissions for self-LED advertisements on private properties, in violation of Section 158 of the BBMP Act 2020, the petitioner claimed.

Apart from seeking a stay on issuance of further permissions, and also on GBA rules permitting conversion to commercial self-LED advertisements, the petitioner sought emoval of all self-LED advertisements displaying commercial advertisements. A direction was also sought to Bescom to cut off power supply to LED advertisements put up on buildings without occupancy certificates. TNN

Black magic fears drove realtor to kill rival: Cops

Rajiv.Kalkod
@timesofindia.com

Police said Gopal (in pic) worked under Mohan as a commission agent and then started operating independently. This development didn't go down well with the latter

Bengaluru: Investigation into the sensational kidnap and murder of realtor Gopal near Anekal has taken a dramatic turn with police saying the killing was orchestrated by his former business associate who believed Gopal had used black magic to ruin him.

Eight people, including two minors, were arrested from their hideout in Krishnagiri, Tamil Nadu, Tuesday night for the kidnap and murder.

The drama unfolded around 7pm Sunday when Gopal was driving his SUV with a friend, Satish. Near Anekal, a mini-goods vehicle allegedly rammed the car, forcing them to stop. As the two men stepped out, the attackers sprayed a chemical on Satish's face and abducted Gopal in another vehicle. The following morning, police in Krishnagiri alerted their Anekal counterparts after discovering a body dumped by the roadside near Denkanikote. A photograph of the victim confirmed it was Gopal. By then, Anekal police had already registered a kidnap case, which was later altered to murder.

Gopal's wife, Swati, told police that Mohan Babu, his former business partner, was responsible for the murder. She claimed her husband was assaulted by Mohan and his aides last year, but they didn't approach police because of Mohan's influence.

Following Swati's statement, police picked up Mohan for questioning, and based on his inputs, arrested Ananda, Santosh Kumar, Teja, Darshan and Nikhil, besides two minors. Two other suspects, Harsha and Narayanaswamy, are absconding.

During interrogation, cops learnt Mohan had grown increasingly suspicious that Gopal was practising black magic against him, which he believed had led to setbacks in his real estate business.

Bengaluru Rural district superintendent of police MV Chandrakant said: "Gopal used to work under Mohan as a commission agent and then started operating independently. This didn't go down well with the latter. Mohan also believed that black magic practised by Gopal had adversely impacted his business and health."

The relationship between the two soured in recent years. "For the past five years, Gopal started focusing on his own deals. Some of the earlier joint settlements were eventually handled by him alone, which brought him considerable profits. This, coupled with his growing reputation, made Mohan insecure and fuelled resentment," a senior police officer said.

Two rowdies held, pistols & bullets seized

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Central Crime Branch sleuths arrested 2 rowdies, Nagendra from Bengaluru and Suhail from Mysuru, after seizing two country-made pistols and three bullets from them.

The accused were declared absconding warranties. They purchased the pistols from different persons in Hyderabad and Ahmedabad for Rs 40,000, a senior police officer said.

HC refuses to interfere in ex-MLA's conviction

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

CHEQUE CASES

Bengaluru: In a setback for MP Kumaraswamy, former BJP MLA from Mudigere constituency in Chikkamagaluru district, the high court refused to interfere with the trial court's order convicting him in eight cheque-bounce cases.

The Supreme Court holds that during the exercise of revisional jurisdiction, the high court cannot set aside concurrent factual findings, Justice M Nagaprasanna noted in his order. The revisional court cannot re-analyse or reinterpret the evidence on record. Its object, as laid down in several cases, is limited to setting right a patent defect or error of jurisdiction, the judge said.

On Feb 13, 2023, a special court held Kumaraswamy guilty and directed him to pay Rs 135.9 lakh to complainant HP Huvappa Gowda, an agriculturalist from Chikkamagaluru. In default, the accused was to undergo six months' simple imprisonment in each of the eight cases. The sessions court confirmed the order, forcing him to approach HC.

TIMES interact
Connecting People, Connecting Needs.
To book your ad
Logon to: ads.timesofindia.com
or Call: 18001205474 (Toll Free)
Scan QR Code

real estate
BANGALORE PROPERTIES
ELECTRONIC CITY

SALE 40x60 Plot
Near Hosa Road Metro Station, Electronic City,
in Gated community
NORTH FACING,
E-Khata, Borewell and GAIL Gas, Call VERNA DEVELOPERS, MG ROAD, BLR, 93531 28035.

FOR SALE
BANGALORE

DISTRESS _SALE - COMMERCIAL OFFICE A-Khata Property BBMP Guideline Value Rs 3.67 Crore Sale Price Rs 2.47 Crore WhatsApp -9916847200

jobs
SITUATION VACANT
ACADEMIC
PRINCIPAL

A Reputed CBSE School located in Chikkabellandur, Sarjapur Road
REQUIRED PRINCIPAL
Invites applications for the position of Principal
Eligibility: Postgraduate with B.Ed / M.Ed
Minimum: 8–10 years teaching experience
3–5 years administrative experience
Strong leadership & communication skills Knowledge of CBSE curriculum.
ATTRACTIVE SALARY OFFERED
Send Resume: principal.s2026@gmail.com
Contact: +91 80888 39049

TEACHER

An International Pre-School in J.P. Nagar invites applications from qualified and passionate candidates
WE ARE HIRING
HEAD OF PRE-SCHOOL & TEACHERS
Positions:
Head of Pre-School
Pre-School Teachers
Administrative staff for front office
Qualification:
Graduate / Postgraduate with Montessori / NTT / Early Childhood Education
Relevant teaching experience in Pre-School / Kindergarten
Good communication & leadership skills
ATTRACTIVE SALARY OFFERED
Send Resume: principal.j2026@gmail.com
Contact: +91 95358 62400

ADMINISTRATION
OFFICE ASSISTANTS

HIRING OFFICE ASSISTANTS & CLERKS (Textile Export Company) Bommanahalli, Bangalore. Mail to: starsilks@gmail.com

Readers are recommended to make appropriate enquires and seek appropriate advice before sending money, incurring any expenses, acting on medical recommendations or entering into any commitment in relation to any advertisement published in this publication. All creatives marked as Advertorial, Spotlight and Promotional Features are to be treated as Advertisements. The Times of India Group doesn't vouch for any claims made by the Advertisers of the products and services. The Printer, Publisher, Editor, and the owners of The Times of India Group publications shall not be held liable for any consequences, in the event such claims are not honoured by the Advertisers.

MARKETING, ADVERTISING & SALES
SERVICES
HOTEL INDUSTRY
WALK IN

WANTED RECEPTIONIST for a hotel in Brigade Road. Retired person can also apply. Contact: Joven Central, 129, Brigade Rd, above Whitegold.

FRONT Office Executive/ Receptionist/ Telecaller for Hotels & Serviced Apartments at Bangalore MG Road area with knowledge of Hotel Management Software & Communication Skills. Rs 25-40k. WhatsApp only to 7899612345

PRIME PROPERTY

NEWLY CONSTRUCTED HOUSE FOR SALE
Newly constructed 4 BHK (3 floors)
(Ground floor parking, 1st floor: 2BHK & 2nd floor: 2BHK)
house ready for registration.
30x40, MUDA Allotted site
West Facing site
North Facing Door
Used high class materials with Lift
Call:
77900 88900

TIMES interact SPECIAL

RATE OF INTEREST 7.25% (Onwards & Competitive)
Loan Starts from 1Cr - 100Cr
• Secured Loan
• Unsecured Loan
• Take over Loan
• Project Loan
• NPA Release
Minimum 1Crore & above
DSA Agencies & Consultant - Welcome | 78450 74199
info@evergreenglobal.in | www.evergreenglobal.in

BUSINESS CONNECT

Available for SALE
150 BPM CARBONATED BEVERAGE FILLING LINE in Running Condition.
Line Comprises of Linear Blow Molders, Rinser, Filler, Capper Labeler, Warmer, Shrink Wrap, Conveyors etc.
120 CPM, CSD CAN FILLING in Running Condition.
Line Comprises of Depalletizer, Filler, Warmer, Shrink Wrap, Conveyors.
Live Video / Physical Inspection / Specifications of Equipments can be arranged on request.
Contact : Mr. SUBRAMANIUM
+91 9866627096

BOOK YOUR SHOPPING ADS
FOR BOOKING PLEASE CONTACT
Pushpak 9665660920
TO BOOK ONLINE LOG ON TO
Ads.timesofindia.com
SCAN TO BOOK
EXCLUSIVE OFFERS AND ASSISTANCE

personal

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Pushpalata Katekar W/o Kiran Katekar R/o Flat No : 510, Divya Msr Gateway, MSR Rd, Gokula, Bangalore-54 have changed my name to Pushpa Katekar for all purposes.

I Pramod Kumar r/o G-1/28 T.F. sector-15, rohini, Raja puri kalan, Delhi-110085, have changed my name from Pramod Kumar to Pramod Kumar Panwar.

I, Rajendra Prosad Hazra resident of SMQ-89/16, Akash Vihar camp, Sanjaynagar, Marathalli, Bengaluru-560037, Karnataka, have changed my daughter's Name from Nayrita Hazra To Natwrita Hazra vide Affidavit IN-KA90946079021567Y dated 24/04/2026 before of A.R MuneerAhmed, Advocate & Notary.

I, Neena Mary Picardo, D/o Lucia Picardo residing at Begur, Bengaluru have changed my name to Neena Picardo for all purposes, including passport.

I,VIKASH JAIN&VIKAS JAIN O,s/o late Omprakash residing at #2,4th floor,5th cross,J.M.lane,balepet,Banglore-560053 have changed my name to VIKAS JAIN, vide affidavit dated 10/03/2026 before notary A.R.NAGENDRA, Reg no12405 Channapatna Taluk.

I Vallepu Malleeswari R/O 15-34-2, Gajjalavaripalli, Urlagaddapodu, Srinivasa Nagar, Kodur, Annamayya 516101 i have changed my name to Sarangula Malliswari for all purpose.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Rakesh Ramesh, r/at 33/3, 11th B Main, Vyalikaval, Malleswaram, Bangalore 560003 have changed my name to Rakesh for all future purposes vide affidavit dt. 11.03.2026 sworn before Notary Mohammed Hussain K, Bangalore.

I, SEEMA SUBASH D/O SUBASH SHUKLA R/O R.T. Nagar near GVR PLAZA, Bangalore have changed my name to AVIRA SUBASH Henceforth I shall be known as AVIRA SUBASH.

SOUTH SPECIAL

ROYALOAK
UNBEATABLE PRICE
COMPUTER TABLE
STARTING FROM
₹4,899
7676367636 royaloakindia.com Scan to Shop Online

GET NOTICED

Product range from: Officeline YOURS FOR YEARS TO COME
MANUFACTURER OF HOSPITAL FURNITURE
Mediline COLLECTIONS MANUFACTURER | FACTORY CUM SHOWROOM
PRODUCT RANGE
& many more
OFFICELINE COLLECTIONS
#6/1, Survey No.: 24/1, Shivasri Layout, Somashettyhalli, Chikkabanavara Post, Yeshwanthpur Hobli, Bangalore North - 560090
Call: 9972337381 / 9945619940
officelineindia@gmail.com www.officelineindia.com

LUXURY INTERIORS
TRANSPARENT PRICES
KRISH-V GLOBAL
• Flexible Packages • Transparent Process
• No Hidden Costs • Guaranteed Timely Completion
9164 056 000
www.krishvglobalinteriors.com

ALDOVIA RESORT & CONVENTION
SWISS TOWN, BANGALORE
TENDER NOTICE
Aldovia Resort & Convention, Swiss Town, Bangalore invites tenders for an annual supply contract in the following categories for a period of 11 months, commencing from 1st of May 2026 to 31st March 2027.

FOOD & BEVERAGE

1	Local Groceries, Whole Spices, Branded Spices, Dry Fruits & Nuts	9	Sona Masoori Rice & Basmati Rice
2	Imported Groceries, Bakery Products, Tinned, Canned & Bottled Food Products	10	Chats & Savouries, Indian sweets & Snacks
3	Fresh Fruits (Indian & Imported)	11	Cold Cuts Local & Imported
4	Frozen Green Peas, Corn & Food Items	12	Poultry (Chicken, Farm Fresh Eggs & Cage Free Eggs)
5	Fresh Milk, Dairy Products Local & Imported Cheese	13	Fresh Fish & Sea Food
6	Fresh Noodles & Wonton Sheets	14	Frozen Sea Food Local & Imported
7	Ice Cream & Kulfis	15	Lamb Products and Fresh Tender loin
8	Fresh Local Vegetables, & Exotic Vegetables (Local & Imported), Peeled Garlic, Bean Sprouts, Peeled Shallots/Onions, Micro Greens, Mushrooms & Grated Coconut		

GENERAL ITEMS & SERVICES

1	Office & Printing Stationery	6	Engineering Supplies (Electrical, Plumbing, Painting & Hardware)
2	LPG, Gel Fuel & Charcoal	7	Disposable, packing material & Cleaning Supplies and Tissue Paper Products
3	Guest Room Amenities	8	Goods, transport vehicle providers
4	Fresh Flowers and Flower designs	9	Manpower – KST, ODC, Kitchen, F&B Service, Housekeeping and Laundry
5	Hiring of AV Equipment and Banquet CCG/ Furniture	10	Duct Cleaning, Kalai, Buffing,Gas Burner Cleaning, Façade/Glass Cleaning & Garden Maintenance

Tender forms, along with specifications, are available for collection at the Purchase Office of Aldovia Resort & Convention Swiss Town Bangalore. Located at Swiss Town, Sadahalli Post, Devanahalli Taluk, Bangalore – 562110. Contact number 9591754848.They can be obtained at a cost of Rs.500 per application from 15th March, 2026 until 31st March, 2026. All sealed tenders should be addressed to the Aldovia Resort & Convention Bangalore Purchase Committee. The Purchase Committee retains the right to accept or reject tenders in full or in part without providing any reasons.
All tenderers proposing to apply should note: All tenderers must possess mandatory licenses required to conduct business and comply with FSSAI Act, rules and regulations applicable at all times.Certification/labelling for all products and temperature control for chilled and frozen items as per FSSAI standards is mandatory. HACCP/ISO-certified vendors will be preferred.

GET NOTICED

BHAGAVAD GITA
Chapter 5
The Yoga of Renunciation of Action
Discourse in English by Sunandaji
14 - 17 March 2026
6:45 pm - 8.00 pm
R V Teachers' College
Jayanagar 2nd Block
Near Lalbagh Metro Station
Bengaluru
All are Welcome
96321 93390

TRAVEL TIMES

INDIA'S BIGGEST TRAVEL SHOW NETWORK
TTF TRAVEL & TOURISM FAIR
13 14 15 March 2026
Tripura Vasini, Palace Grounds (Gate 2 & 3), Bengaluru
OPENS TOMORROW
Reserved for Travel Trade
13 March: 11:00 am - 6:00 pm
14 March: 11:00 am - 2:00 pm
Open to all
14 March: 2:00 pm - 6:00 pm
15 March: 11:00 am - 6:00 pm
Meet hundreds of travel brands and destinations from across India. Discover exciting travel deals and holiday packages for your next getaway!
Host State: Karnataka | Partner State: Goa | Feature States: Telangana, Incredible India
Supported by
Supported by
Official Publication
Organised by
Free entry for all visitors* • 022 4555 8555 • www.ttfotm.com
*TTF is a trade show, visitors below 15 years are not allowed.
Right of Entry Reserved. Terms and Conditions Apply. ttfotm.com/entry-tnc

TIMES NATION

THE TIMES OF INDIA, BENGALURU | THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2026

SPECIAL PRAYERS HELD IN DHARAMSHALA FOR LONG LIFE OF TIBETAN SPIRITUAL LEADER DALAI LAMA

ADITYANATH MEETS NOBEL LAUREATE NOVOSELOV TO BOOST UP AS HUB FOR ADVANCED MATERIAL RESEARCH

HACK OF THE DAY — SCHEDULE EXPORTS TO AUTOMATICALLY BACKUP YOUR GOOGLE DATA

WHAT IT SOLVES: Risk of account lockouts, accidental deletions, or server failures that could wipe out years of emails, photos, and Drive documents.

WHAT TO DO: Use Google Takeout to create a portable archive of your entire digital footprint.

STEPS:

1. Visit the Google Takeout page and log in.
2. Select specific products (Gmail, Photos, Drive) or "Select all" for a full backup.
3. Click Next step and choose a Delivery method (Email link or cloud upload to Dropbox/OneDrive).
4. Select Export type (one-time or scheduled) and File type (usually .zip).
5. Click Create export. Google will email you a download link once the archive is ready.

CAREFUL: Large archives can take days to process. Download your files over a stable Wi-Fi connection to avoid massive mobile data charges.

Scan for more hacks

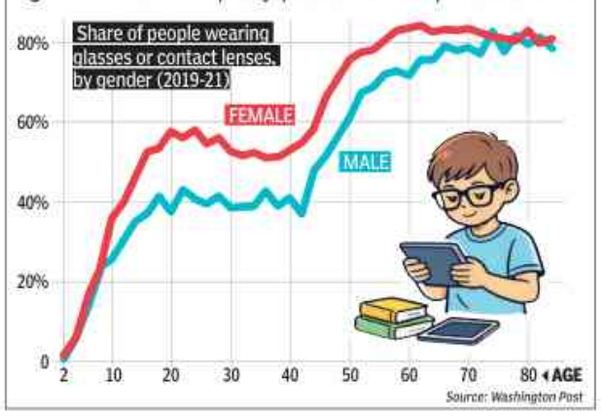
Hacks are based on verified public sources. Readers are advised to follow official websites & updated rules

Tip from **sourabh.kulesh**@timesinternet

STATISTICS A slice of life in numbers

What the 40s does to our eyesight

While women are slightly more affected, but overall use of glasses climbs steeply in childhood, steadies in early adulthood, and jumps again in our 40s — when presbyopia sets in and fine print starts to blur



Source: Washington Post

Don't rush-book LPG cylinders, delivery in 2.5 days, says govt

'Oil Cos Have Ramped Up Output By 25%'

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

People stand in a long queue with their LPG cylinders outside a gas agency amid the LPG supply shortage in Prayagraj on Wednesday

New Delhi: Govt on Wednesday said oil companies have ramped up LPG output by 25%, helping bridge a part of the deficit due to deficient imports, and advised against panic buying as cylinders are being delivered in two-and-a-half days.

India imports around 60% of LPG and the closure of the Strait of Hormuz has hurt supplies prompting govt to prioritise domestic supplies. On Tuesday, govt had said that there was a 10% increase in domestic cooking gas production.

"Feedback suggests panic booking and hoarding behaviour triggered by misinformation. I want to clarify that our normal delivery cycle for domestic LPG remains around two-and-a-half days... there is no need for customers to rush-book cylinders," Sujata Sharma, joint secretary in the petroleum ministry, told a press conference. Officials said states have been informed that there is enough stock of LPG to meet the requirement of domestic consumers, which is a priority for govt along with hospitals and educational institutions.

She said that domestic gas prices in India were lower than other parts of the world. Addressing the issue of diversion of domestic cylinders from gas agencies, Sharma said they cannot be delivered without the one-time password sent to the customer's registered mobile number. She added that a three-member committee formed by the ministry was looking into the issue of consumers using commercial LPG cylinders and ensuring fair and transparent distribution.

On crude, Sharma said India has diversified imports from nearly 40 countries and supply remains secure. "Our daily consumption is about 55 lakh barrels. Through diversified procurement, the volumes we have secured today exceed what would normally have arrived through the Strait of Hormuz during this period," she said.

Oil marketing companies have secured various crude cargoes from different sources and, as a result of this diversification, about 70% of India's crude imports now come from routes outside the strait, compared to about 55% earlier.

Don't let cylinder scare trigger law & order issue: Centre

Dipak Dash, Atul Mathur & Bharti Jain | TNN

New Delhi: The Centre on Wednesday asked states to address LPG cylinder supply constraints and ensure fears of scarcity does not turn into law and order issue. The states were also asked to check black marketing and hoarding of cooking gas cylinders, amid reports of panic booking.

TOI has learnt that in a meeting with chief secretaries and DGPs — chaired by home secretary Govind Mohan — petroleum secretary Niraj Mittal informed the top state officials that there is no reason to panic as availability of both natural gas and domestic supply remain the govt's priority.

The Centre shared details of two recent orders while clarifying that restrictions on the distribution of LPG apply only to commercial establishments, such as hotels and restaurants. Hospitals and educational institutions have been kept out of restrictions. "Since there is no shortage to meet domestic LPG supply, states have a bigger role to ensure that there is no panic buying. It said hoarders and black marketeers may take advantage of the situation and illegal sale of both domestic and commercial LPG cylinders must be prevented," said an official.

The states have also been asked to watch prices of essential commodities considering that there is ample availability of these items.

Consumer affairs secretary Nidhi Khare spoke about the prices of essential commodities being in a comfortable zone and added that the Centre was monitoring 40 commodities, an official said.

India pumps up Russia oil buy by 45% in March

Atul.Mathur
@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: India's oil purchases from Russia have increased by nearly 45% in March, rising from around 1 million barrels a day (mbd) in Feb to 1.5 mbd in the first 11 days of the month.

With transit through the Strait of Hormuz disrupted since the beginning of the conflict 12 days ago, supplies from oil-rich West Asian countries have fallen drastically compared with the flows in Feb. In the first 11 days of March, India received 0.6 mbd from Iraq, 0.4 mbd from Saudi Arabia and 0.1 mbd from the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Saudi Arabia was the second-largest supplier of crude, behind Russia, in Feb, with daily supplies of a little over 1 million barrels. Iraq also delivered nearly 1 mbd to India last month, while the United Arab Emirates supplied 0.6 mbd.

India imported nearly 5.2 mbd of crude in Feb, which has come down to 4.5 million barrels a day in March. Energy analysts said the number of cargoes is likely to come down further as most vessels delivering supplies this month had departed from their origin ports before the conflict broke out.

Gor: India's oil purchases have helped maintain price stability

New Delhi: US ambassador **Sergio Gor** lauded India's role in maintaining stable oil prices around the world, saying Washington recognises ongoing purchases of Russian oil by the Indian govt are a part of this effort. The remarks by the ambassador follows the US's decision last week, in the middle of the war in West Asia and the mounting threat to global energy supplies, to allow India a 30-day waiver to purchase Russian oil already at sea.

The North American ambassador said on X that India had been a great partner in maintaining stable oil prices around the world. "The US recognises ongoing purchases of Russian oil are a part of this effort. India is one of the largest consumers and refiners of oil and it is essential for the US and India to work hand in hand for market stability for Americans and Indians," said the ambassador. TNN

रजिस्ट्री सं. डी.एल. 33004/99 — REGD. NO. D.L.-33004/99

भारत का राजपत्र
The Gazette of India

सी.जी. - डी.एल. - अ. - 25022026-270467
CG-DL-E-25022026-270467
असाधारण
EXTRAORDINARY
भाग II - खण्ड-3 - उप-खण्ड-(ii)
PART II—Section 3—Sub-section (ii)
प्राधिकार से प्रकाशित
PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY

सं. 933] नई दिल्ली, मंगलवार, फरवरी 24, 2026/फाल्गुन 5, 1947
No. 933] NEW DELHI, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2026/PHALGUNA 5, 1947

MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS
NOTIFICATION
New Delhi, the 24th February, 2026

S.O.977 (E) : Whereas by notification of the Government of India in the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, S.O. 4134 (E] dated 11th September, 2025 published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary Part II, Section 3, Sub-Section (ii] issued under Sub-Section (1] of Section 3A of the National Highways Act, 1956 (48 of 1956] (hereinafter referred to as the said Act], the Central Government declared its intention to acquire the lands specified in the Schedule, annexed to the said notification for building (widening / Six laning etc.] maintenance, management and operation of National Highway No.48 (Old NH-4], on the stretch of Land from Km.402.600 to Km.433.200 (SLAO, 'Dhara Mahal', 1st Floor, 5th Cross, U.B.Hill, Dharwad - 580007] (Hubballi-Dharwad Bypass Section] in the village(s) of Jogayallapur, Mansur, Sannasomapur, Yarikoppa, Kelageri, Hiremalligawad, Itigatti & Kumbapur M Narendra of Dharwad Taluk and in Ayodhaya, Rayanal, Gabbur, Tarihal and Gokul villages of Hubli Taluk in the District of Dharwad in the State of Karnataka.

And whereas the substance of the said Notification S.O. 4134 (E] dated 11th September, 2025 has been published in "Vijayavani" Kannada daily, and in "Times of India" English daily both dated 23-09-2025; under sub-section (3] of section 3A of the said Act;

And whereas the Objections filed under section 3-C, considered and settled the same appropriately. have been received and the same have been considered and disallowed by the Competent Authority;

And whereas in pursuance of sub-section (1] of section 3D of the said Act, the Competent Authority has submitted its report to the Central Government.

Now, therefore upon the receipt of the said report of the Competent Authority and in exercise of the powers conferred by sub section (1] of section 3D of the said Act, the Central Government hereby declares that the land specified in the said Schedule should be acquired for the aforesaid purpose;

And further, in pursuance of the sub-section (2] of section 3D of the said Act, the Central Government hereby declares that on the publication of this notification in the Official Gazette, the lands specified in the said Schedule shall vest absolutely in the Central Government free from all encumbrances.

Under the provisions of sub-section 3G (1](2](3] & (4] of National Highways Act, the public notice is issued to the owners or interested persons of the lands to produce the following documents either himself or by their representative in person within 21 days from the date of this publication to the Special Land Acquisition Officer, NH-48 (Old NH-4], "Dhara Mahal", 1st Floor, 5th Cross, U.B.Hill, Dharwad - 580007.

(1] Original Records, (2] Sale/Partition / other deeds of titles, (3] RTC of the current year, (4] Receipt of assessment of land paid, (5] Copy of the Mutation register and any other relevant documents.

The land owners have to give their expected amount of compensation with proof of justification.

If anybody fails to produce the above documents to the undersigned within the stipulated period, the compensation will be awarded as per the records available in this office.

SCHEDULE

Brief description of the lands to be acquired, with or without structure, falling in the Hubballi - Dharwad Bypass in the stretch of land from Km.402.600 to Km.433.200 of NH-48 (old NH-4) in the district of DHARWAD in the state of KARNATAKA.

Scan for notification in English & Hindi

ಕನ್ನಡದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಧಿಸೂಚನೆಗಾಗಿ ಸ್ಕ್ಯಾನ್ ಮಾಡಿ

District: Dharwad
https://egazette.gov.in
Publication date: 07-03-2026
https://bhoomirashi gov in

[F. No. NHAI/11013/01/2010-LA/KRT/DHA/3D]
Sd/- (Devaraj R)
Special Land Acquisition Officer (I/c)
National Highway Authority of India Dharwad

Note : The physical copy of this notification is also available at the Office of SLAO&CA, Dharwad, Landowners may also see the notification there.

A FAIRFAX Company

Thomas Cook

The Great Indian Escape starts here!

Choose from a range of holidays for your summer vacation

Loyalty Points up to ₹ 10 000.00 | Early Bird Discounts up to ₹ 26 000.00* per couple | Free Backpack with every Holiday | ICICI Bank ₹15,000* Instant Discount on Credit Cards

All Inclusive Holidays (with Flights)

7 Days - Himachal @ ₹ 57 000.00 pp
7 Days - Kashmir With Gulmarg Stay @ ₹ 63 900.00 pp
8 Days - North East Delight with Lachung And Yangang Escape @ ₹ 78 000.00 pp
5 Days - Gujarat @ ₹ 23 900.00 pp (without Flights)
7 Days - Magical Ladakh @ ₹ 34 000.00 pp (without Flights)
6 Days - Andaman @ ₹ 35 400.00 pp (without Flights)
7 Days - Uttarakhand @ ₹ 38 400.00 pp (without Flights)
7 Days - Assam & Meghalaya @ ₹ 51 000.00 pp (without Flights)

Spiritual Journeys (without Flights)

Assisted Darshan* | Specially Curated for Senior Citizens | Sacred Rituals Included | Expert Guidance

6 Days - Char Dham Yatra By Helicopter (Rudrabhishek in Kedarnath & Mahabhishek in Badrinath)* @ ₹ 2 32 500.00
14 Days - Kailash Mansarovar Yatra By Bus @ ₹ 2 37 000.00 pp
7 Days - Nepal With Muktinath @ ₹ 43 400.00 pp
5 Days - Puri Bhubaneswar Darshan Yatra @ ₹ 36 000.00 pp
5 Days - Narmada Jyotirlinga Darshan Yatra @ ₹ 32 400 .00 pp
7 Days - Sri Lanka Ramayan Anant Yatra @ ₹ 70 300.00 pp (with Flights)

TravSure — Travel with Confidence: FREE Rescheduling & Cancellation in Emergencies | Additional Trip Protection | 24x7 Customer Support

Inclusions: Airfare (where specified), Hotels, Meals, Insurance, Sightseeing & Services of our 'Experience Managers' as per itinerary.

Also Available: 7 Days - Bhutan (Direct Flights From Banglaore) @ ₹ 75 900.00 pp | 6 Days - Nepal @ ₹ 32 000.00 pp (without Flights)

Call Your Nearest Store

BENGALURU: M. G. Road: 8291227617 | Banashankari: 9167519822 | Basaveshwar Nagar: 9619479651 | Electronic City : 9167594406 | HSR Layout: 9167492765 | Indiranagar: 8291471737 | Jayanagar: 9167491079 | JP Nagar: 9167492995 | Kammanahalli: 9167494931 | Koramangala: 9167491308 | Malleshwaram: 9619475496 | Sahakarnagar: 9167511759 | Whitefield : 9167078703 | DAVANAGERE: 9619238379 | HUBLI: 9167495312 | MANGALORE: 8291471415 | MYSORE: 9619473026 | UDUPI: 9167498504

T & C Apply: Prices mentioned are Ex-Banglaore & are per adult on twin sharing basis. Taxes as applicable. Guaranteed Departure refers to the operation of the Group on dates indicated & does not guarantee individual customer visas - which are purely Consular decisions. Thomas Cook utilises the services of various third party service providers to deliver specific services in the products/tours. Discount up to Rs. 26,000.00 can be availed on minimum booking of 2 pax. The prices here are inclusive of discount.

91675 31028 | thomascook.in

PM: TN wants a govt for every family, not for just one family

Positions NDA As Alternative To DMK In State

V.Srivatsal@timesofindia.com

In Trichy Wednesday, PM said desire for change is gaining momentum in Tamil Nadu and the state has made up its mind to throw out DMK govt

Trichy: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Wednesday positioned NDA as a credible alternative to Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam in Tamil Nadu and called upon the people to support the alliance to bring transparent governance and faster development to the state.

Speaking at the NDA rally in Trichy, Modi said the upcoming election was the most important election in Tamil Nadu's history. "The choice before the people is clear. One path leads to dynasty politics and corruption. The other path leads to development, opportunity and honest governance," he said.

Modi said "the desire for change is gaining huge momentum. The whole state has made up its mind to throw out DMK govt. People want a govt for every family, not for just one family, and they know only NDA can bring that change."

He said infrastructure funds given to Tamil Nadu had tripled in the last decade. The NDA govt has spent nearly Rs 57,000 crore on highways, which is four times more than the Congress-DMK govt. "Nearly Rs 8,000 crores has been invested in building rural roads," Modi said.

Farmers of the delta are the backbone of Tamil Nadu's food security but DMK has failed to deliver on its promises, he said. "They deserved fair prices, good facilities and modern storage infrastructure. DMK also promised a big increase in MSP for paddy but failed to fulfil these promises," he said. He alleged that illegal sand mining was destroying rivers and threatening the environment. "Yet those responsible for this continue to enjoy DMK's protection," he claimed.

The rally was attended by leaders of the alliance parties, including AIADMK general secretary Eddapadi K Palanisami, PMK's Anbumani Ramadoss, AMMK's TTV Dhinakaran and TMC leader G K Vasan.

PM to give land deeds to Assam tea workers

Prabin.Kalita@timesofindia.com

Guwahati: PM Modi will launch the distribution of land deeds to thousands of tea workers in poll-bound Assam on March 13, giving them a stake in plantations where they have lived and worked for two centuries since British planters brought them from villages of Chotanagpur division, Bihar and Bengal.

Nearly 3.5 lakh families across 825 tea estates stand to benefit, with the initiative seeking to legalise land rights of generations living in labour lines without homesteads of their own. "The PM will hand over the first land patta to a designated tea garden worker. Distribution will then be carried out across the state," CM Himanta Sarma said. Tea tribes and Adivasis, about 20% of population, influence nearly 35 of 126 assembly seats.

SC: It shall be appreciated if Centre forms a panel of domain experts within a week

▶ Continued from page 1

It shall be appreciated if a committee of domain experts to be constituted by the Union govt within one week also associates National Judicial Academy, for finalising the legal studies curriculum proposed by NCERT for not only class 8 but the higher classes, said SC bench

We see no reason as to why these kinds of persons should be associated in any manner for the purpose of framing of curriculum or finalisation of textbook for the children, the next generation of this country, it further said while directing Centre, states and Union territories, universities and public institutions receiving govt funds "to forthwith disassociate with these three persons and not assign any responsibility which involves public funds either fully or partially".

Leaving a window open for the three to seek modification of the order, the bench said the three can do so by approaching SC with an explanation for drafting the chapter "The Role of Judiciary in Our Society", which contained the controversial reference to "corruption" in the institution.

The bench took strong exception to certain social media platforms, websites and individuals defending the reference to alleged corruption in judiciary in the NCERT textbook. It said, "After the February 26 order (which banned the circulation of the entire textbook) was passed, some elements of the so-called social media have acted and reacted irresponsibly. We firmly believe in catching the bull by its horns. We direct the Union govt to identify such sites, the persons running those sites and furnish their full details. The law must take its own course against mischief mongers." Solicitor general Tushar Mehta said Newton's law "for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction" has been redefined by social media which believes that for "every action, there is a disproportionate and idiotic overreaction". The bench clarified that its Feb-26 and today's orders "are not intended to prevent objective and legitimate criticism of the institutional functioning of the judiciary. The judiciary, like any other institution, suffers from deficiencies and if an expert committee highlights such deficiencies, it will be a welcome step for the future generation of this nation, including the future judges and practitioners, and offer an avenue for present stakeholders to take correctional steps".

But SC disapproved of NCERT's stand that the controversial chapter on judiciary has been "duly rewritten" after the controversy for incorporation in the textbook. The bench said that NCERT is making the issue more complex and impeding transparent and dispassionate information on judiciary from being disseminated to students.

We are grateful for humane judgment, family thanks God

▶ Continued from page 1

Expressing his gratitude to Supreme Court, he said, "We are grateful for the humane judgment. We thank God. The judges who heard the case were also guided by God's grace. Through their guidance, the judgment we wanted was delivered. We received support from doctors and we are satisfied with that. My wife and I are getting old now. I am 63 and she is almost 60," he added.

Ashok clarified that the court's order does not involve active euthanasia but allows withdrawal of life-support such as the PEG feeding tube while providing palliative care. In 2013, when he was in the final semester of his BTech (civil engineering) course at Panjab University, a fall from the fourth floor of his paying guest accommodation in Kharar left Harish – a bright and cheerful boy – with severe brain injuries. Despite treatment PGI Chandigarh, and AIIMS, Ram Manohar Lohia and Lok Nayak hospitals in Delhi, he developed diffuse axonal injury (a severe form of traumatic brain injury in the white matter) and has since the fall been in permanent vegetative state with quadriplegia (paralysis of all four limbs and torso) and 100% disability.

Bedridden, Harish has been dependent on a feeding tube, with mother Nirmala Devi and Ashok his primary caregivers. Ashok said he hoped the judgment would help other families facing endless suffering.

"This fight is not only about our own son. Across India, there may be many families facing a similar situation. We raised this issue in larger public interest." After years of caring for their son and recognising that his condition was irreversible, the parents approached courts seeking permission for passive euthanasia. They pleaded for guidelines laid down by Supreme Court in Common Cause vs Union of India case — which allows withdrawal of life-sustaining treatment in certain circumstances — to be applied to Harish's case. The plea reached Supreme Court last year. During proceedings, multiple medical boards were constituted to examine Harish's condition.

Article 21 inherently includes right to die with dignity, says SC

▶ Continued from page 1

Due focus must be given to the comfort of the patient through pain and symptom management, SC said while directing AIIMS to take care of Harish.

Though the apex court in 2018 framed extensive guidelines regarding permitting passive euthanasia, it is the first time that it had applied that verdict in a case.

Tragedy struck Harish when he was 20 years old and pursuing B.Tech from Punjab University. He fell from the fourth floor of his paying guest accommodation and suffered a diffuse axonal injury. He has remained in a vegetative state since then. He has remained bedridden since the incident, and as a result, suffered terribly from painful bedsores.

Describing dignity as the most sacred possession of a human being whose sanctity can neither be lost in the process of death nor when death occurs, SC said the right to live with dignity under Article 21 of the Constitution inherently includes the right to die with dignity. It said that when prolonging an inevitable death comes with the heavy cost of pain and suffering, then it directly impacts the right to die with dignity, and an individual can choose to accept life by preferring to die.

"Temporarily keeping alive a terminally ill patient who is brain dead or in PVS (persistent vegetative state), solely because doctors are able to leverage the technological advancements in medicine, and compelling such patients to endure a slow, agonising death, cannot fully be compatible with the constitutional ideal of dignity. There would arise a point of precipice where such prolonged medical treatment would stand as an affront to basic human dignity," the bench said.

SC held that CANH, which is sustaining Harish's life, is part of medical treatment which can be withdrawn, and it is in the applicant's best interest, both medically sound and consistent with a patient-centric assessment of dignity, values and welfare. "We are, therefore, of the considered view that CANH constitutes 'medical treatment' and must be governed by the same legal principles applicable to the withholding or withdrawal of other forms of life-sustaining medical interventions, subject, of course, to the safeguards and procedural requirements laid down by this Court in Common Cause," it said.

₹57.4 cr set for Badrinath Dham, ₹63.6 cr for Kedarnath

▶ Continued from page 1

He added that the restriction would apply to the innermost sanctum and the immediate temple premises. Dwivedi said the move was aimed at preserving the sanctity of temples in Uttarakhand. During the same meeting, the panel approved the estimated budget for the next financial year, keeping in view preparations for the upcoming Char Dham Yatra. Of the total allocation of Rs 121.07 crore for 2026-27, Rs 57.47 cr was earmarked for Badrinath Dham and Rs 63.60 cr for Kedarnath Dham. In another decision, the board approved the creation of a Teerth Purohit Welfare Fund aimed at improving the social and economic security of temple priests associated with the pilgrimage. Dwivedi said the fund would support welfare measures for teerth purohits, including financial assistance and other benefits.

The portals of Kedarnath temple are scheduled to open on April 22, while Badrinath temple will open on April 23 for the 2026 pilgrimage season.

With ₹11,000 crore projects, PM Modi woos 'Keralam'

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Kochi: PM Modi Wednesday dedicated projects worth nearly Rs 11,000 crore to Kerala during his visit to the poll-bound state, besides formally kicking off the NDA's campaign.

He laid the foundation stone for a polypropylene unit worth over Rs 5,500 crore at the Kochi refinery of BPCL, inaugurated two major highway projects costing over Rs 2,000 crore each and dedicated railway initiatives worth Rs 142 crore to the nation. Modi repeatedly referred to the state as "Keralam" at his various events in the city. Addressing an event, he said the Centre's approval to rename Kerala as "Keralam" had fulfilled a longstanding demand of the people of the state.

On Feb 24, the union cabinet had approved the proposal for the name change for which the state assembly had passed a resolution in 2024.

Meanwhile, CM Pinarayi Vijayan and ministers M B Rajesh and K Krishnankutty skipped the PM's official event. No reason was cited for Vijayan's absence, while his cabinet colleagues cited personal inconvenience.

At the NDA rally, Modi said the state should end its trend of alternating between CPM-headed LDF and Congress-led UDF govts. "Give us five years to change Kerala into a developed state," he said. Taking a swipe at Rahul Gandhi, the Prime Minister said he was unaware of the achievements made by India's youth, particularly in drone manufacturing, an apparent reference to the Congress MP's recent statement in Thiruvananthapuram, where he said China was dominating drone manufacturing and India was nowhere close to it currently.

"He doesn't know many companies in India are manufacturing drones. He doesn't know Keralam's youth are building drone startups. He is limited to a small circle and cannot see the growth of India," the Prime Minister said.

Dosa, poori disappear from menu

▶ Continued from P1

Delhi HC administration and advocates were informed that the canteen management would offer food items such as sandwiches, salads, fruit chaat and other similar refreshments, but not the main course dishes due to unavailability of cooking gas. Although the services resumed shortly after LPG supply was secured for the day, the management said uncertainty over availability continues. In Chennai and Hyderabad, dosa, poori and other gas guzzling food items are disappearing from the menus of restaurants, canteens and catering services. In some hostels and PGs along Hyderabad's IT corridor, certain curries such as rajma and chickpea-based dishes were dropped, much to the discomfort of inmates from north India. Even tea and coffee were being rationed by many eateries. Hotel associations are exploring alternatives, including coal, firewood, biogas and electric kitchens.

In UP, oil marketing companies have begun to evaluate if kerosene — largely phased out over the past few years — could serve as an emergency alternative. In Bihar, Jharkhand and other states, too, businesses such as paying guest accommodations, hostels, catering services and restaurants bearing the brunt of the commercial cylinder shortage.

Iran attacks India-bound ship, 20 sailors rescued

Surendra.Singh @timesofindia.com

New Delhi: An India-bound Thai cargo vessel with 23 crew members was among four ships that came under attack in the Strait of Hormuz on Wednesday. The projectile attack left the ship heading for Gujarat's Kandla port ablaze. While 20 crew members have been rescued by the Omani Navy, the fate of three sailors is unknown. Reacting to the attack on Gujarat-bound Mayuree Naree, the Indian govt deplored commercial shipping being made a target of military attacks in the Gulf conflict. "Precious lives, including of Indian citizens, have already been lost in multiple such attacks in the earlier phase of this conflict, and the intensity and lethality of the attacks only seems to be increasing," the govt said in a statement.

India also reiterated that targeting commercial shipping and endangering the lives of innocent civilian crew members, or generally impeding freedom of navigation and commerce, must be avoided. Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) claimed striking two ships — Thai bulk carrier Mayuree Naree and a Liberian-flagged ship in the Hormuz. "Israeli-owned Express Rome ship, flying the Liberian flag, and container ship Mayuree Naree were hit by Iranian projectiles and stopped after ignoring the warnings of IRGC naval forces," said Iran's ISNA news agency citing the Guards' statement.

The third vessel, Japan-flagged container ship One Majesty, sustained minor damage after it was hit by another projectile 25 nautical miles northwest of UAE's Ras Al Khaimah. The hull of Marshall Islands-flagged bulk carrier Star Gwyneth was damaged after being hit by a projectile 50 nautical miles northwest of Dubai, maritime risk management company Vanguard said.

Attack on Speaker is Cong's bid to hide ineffective Rahul: Shah

Kumar.Rakesh @timesofindia.com

New Delhi: Home minister Amit Shah on Wednesday launched a fiery counterattack on the Opposition, targeting Rahul Gandhi, as he ascribed the move to remove Speaker Om Birla to the Leader of Opposition's pique over frequent electoral losses and a bid to cast doubt on various institutions due to Congress's turn to a "completely negative mode".

Speaking in the Lok Sabha at the end of the discussion which stretched over two days, Shah sought to turn the tables on the Opposition by framing the dispute as arising from Congress's attempt to distract attention from what he called Rahul's inability to be an effective parliamentarian by making the Speaker a scapegoat.

He delivered pointed rebuttals to arguments of opposition MPs by citing official figures to assert that Congress was allotted much more time in parliamentary proceedings than was warranted by its actual numbers in the House as an opposition party and contrasted this with the "poor" participation of Rahul Gandhi. Amit Shah urged Jagdambika Pal, who was in the chair, to remove the word if it was unparliamentary, but protests continued.

Oppn collects signatures for notice for CEC's removal

Ambika.Pandit @timesofindia.com

New Delhi: The joint opposition stepped up its attack on Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar as it gathered signatures from MPs to submit a notice this week to the secretariats of both Houses of Parliament to seek a motion for his removal. This is the first time a notice — will be given seeking the removal of the CEC.

The notice — piloted by TMC — will be submitted to the secretary generals of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha. The nearly half a dozen charges, according to sources, range from partisan conduct of the CEC to mass disenfranchisement of voters. MPs of all INDIA bloc parties and even Aam Aadmi Party which is not part of the bloc have signed the letter, sources said. It is likely to be submitted on Thursday itself in all likelihood but not later than Friday, sources said.

Till late on Wednesday evening around 120 MPs had signed the notice to be submitted to the Lok Sabha, and around 60 MPs had signed the notice to be submitted in the Upper House.

As per the procedure, at least 100 MPs must sign a notice seeking the removal of the CEC in the Lower House and the required number is 50 for Rajya Sabha. The notice seeking removal of CEC follows growing accusations from the opposition parties against Kumar. TMC has been demanding a notice for removal of CEC Kumar for a few months.

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
Tender Notice No. CAO/CN/BNC/173/2026
Dated : 03-03-2026
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tenders for the following works.

Name of the Work	Approx. Value
Request for Proposal (RFP) for Appointment of Project Supervision Services Agency (PSSA) for various construction site / Section (Non-EPC) in the jurisdiction of various Deputy Chief Engineer in Hubballi area. **(Tender Ref. No. PSSA-CN-UBL)**	Rs. 19,90,14,858.38

Last date for submission of bids: **Upto 15:00 Hrs on 02-06-2026**
For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
Deputy Chief Engineer/Construction/ Works/Bengaluru Cantonment
PUB/982/AAS/PRB/SWR/2025-26
Download the **RailOne** app. RailOne is the all-in-one railway app by Indian Railways. Passengers can book reserved tickets, unreserved tickets, platform ticktes, and season passes, check PNR status, order food, and access many more services at their fingertips. Use digital payment to book unreserved tickets through **RailOne** app, and enjoy up to a **3%** discount.

Tamil Nadu Power Distribution Corporation Ltd.
Notice Inviting Tenders (E-Tendering Process)

Specification No.	Tender Inviting Authority	Name of the Work
43	SE / C / PCC	Manufacture of 75600 Nos of 8m PSC poles in Neyveli PSc Yard in Villupuram Region

For details of works / Procurement / Due date of submission / Opening, viewing and downloading of e-tenders, please visit the websites **www.tnpdcl.org, www.tenders.tn.gov.in, www.tntenders.gov.in**
DIPR/1725/Tender/2026

POST GRADUATE INSTITUTE OF CHILD HEALTH (PGICH)
Sector-30, Noida-201303
smostoressphpgti@gmail.com, Tele: +91-120-2455552
Advt. No. PGICH, Noida/MOS/Tender/2026/12 Date: 11.03.2026
Notice Inviting bid on GeM Portal
Bids are invited for purchase of below mentioned items through GeM portal in two-parts comprising of (A) Technical bid & (B) Financial bid from OEM/authorized bidders of OEM. For detailed information please visit the GeM Portal website: **https://gem.gov.in**

Sl. No.	Item name	GeM bid no.
01	Wireless Data Logger	GeM Bid No. GEM/2026/B/7322004
02	Cooling Table	GeM Bid No. GEM/2026/B/7322187

The Director reserves the right to accept or reject any offer partially or fully without assigning any reason, therof.
Director

CORRIGENDUM -1 FOR TENDER NOTICE NO.: CON/2026/JAN/05 DATED. 23-01-2026
Corrigendum-1 for Tender Notice No. CON/2026/JAN/05, dated: 23-01-2026 against **Tender No. CE-CON-DK-EPC-2026-01** has been published. For details please visit in website **www.ireps.gov.in**.
Chief Engineer/Con/NL Project/Maligaon
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
Construction Organization
Serving Customers With A Smile

S. E. RAILWAY – TENDER
Tender Notice No. : DRMENGGRNC-10, 12 & 13-2026, Dated 10.03.2026. Tenders are invited by Divisional Railway Manager (Engg), S.E.Railway, Ranchi-834003 for and on behalf of The President of India for the following works : **Sl. No. & Notice No.; Name of work; Tender value; EMD Value : (1) DRMENGGRNC-10-2026;** Construction of various types of buildings including barracks, quarters, Officers' Rest House, transit accommodation for officers, Subordinate Rest House, Multipurpose Hall at Hatia, service buildings, etc., in Ranchi Division; ₹ 52,19,56,314.35; ₹ 27,59,800/- **(2) DRMENGGRNC-12-2026;** Execution of P.way works related with deep screening by BCM, ancillary works of TSR by PQRS Machine (Except TSR), cess repair, trolly refuges, shed, store & other P.way related miscellaneous work in Hatia-Orga section under the jurisdiction of Sr. Divisional Engineer (South) Ranchi; ₹ 2,20,77,131.26; ₹ 2,60,400/-. **(3) DRMENGG RNC-13-2026;** Execution of P.way works related with deep screening by BCM, ancillary works of TSR by PQRS Machine (Except TSR), cess repair, trolly refuges, shed, store & other P.way related miscellaneous work in Ranchi-Tori section under the jurisdiction of Sr. Divisional Engineer (South) Ranchi; ₹ 5,58,44,418.18; ₹ 4,29,200/-. **Tender Closing date & time:** 31.03.2026 at 15.00 hrs. for sl. no. 1 and 02.04.2026 at 15.00 hrs. for sl. no. 2 & 3. Tenderers can visit the website **www.ireps.gov.in** for online tendering. **(PR-1287)**

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
Tender Notice No. CAO/CN/BNC/174/2026
Dated : 04-03-2026
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tenders for the following works.

Name of the Work	Approx. Value
Bagalkot (BGK) - Kudachi (KUD) New BG Line Project : 1. Construction of New RUB Br. No: 103A by cut and cover Method and diverting LC-01 and LC-02 to new RUB between Khajjidoni (KJDI) and Lokapur (LAPR) Stations. 2. Construction of Balance Super structure of ROB Bridge No. 107 at Ch:37637m of span 3x36.00m Composite steel girder + 14x24m PSC Girder + 1x29.0m PSC Girder, approach Road & other miscellaneous works for approach portion at Lokapur (LAPR) Station. **(Tender Ref. No. BGK-KUD-50)**	Rs. 35,81,87,604/-

Last date for submission of bids: **Upto 15:00 Hrs on 27-03-2026**
For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
Deputy Chief Engineer/Construction/ Works/Bengaluru Cantonment
PUB/984/AAS/PRB/SWR/2025-26
Download the **RailOne** app. RailOne is the all-in-one railway app by Indian Railways. Passengers can book reserved tickets, unreserved tickets, platform ticktes, and season passes, check PNR status, order food, and access many more services at their fingertips. Use digital payment to book unreserved tickets through **RailOne** app, and enjoy up to a **3%** discount.

ಕೃಷಿ ಉತ್ಪನ್ನ ಮಾರುಕಟ್ಟೆ ಸಮಿತಿ, ಮದ್ದೂರು
ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:ಕೃ.ಉ.ಮಾ.ಸ.(ಮದ್ದೂರು)/440/2025-26
ದಿ:05-03-2026.
ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಣೆಗಳ ಪದ್ಧತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾತ್ರ
ಕೃಷಿ ಉತ್ಪನ್ನ ಮಾರುಕಟ್ಟೆ ಸಮಿತಿ, ಮದ್ದೂರು 2025-26ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನ ನವಾರ್ಡ್ ಆರ್ಐಐಎಫ್-31 ಯೋಜನೆಯಡಿ ಆಹಾರೋತರ ಮುಖ್ಯ ಮಾರುಕಟ್ಟೆ ಪ್ರಾಂಗಣದಲ್ಲಿ ಹೆಚ್ಚುವರಿ ಮುಚ್ಚು ಪರಾಜುಕಟ್ಟೆ ಸಿ.ಸಿ.ರಸ್ತೆ, ಚರಂಡಿ ಮತ್ತು ಡೆಕ್ ಸ್ಲಾಬ್ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ. (ಪರಿಷ್ಕರಿಸಿದ ಟೆಂಡರ್) ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗೆಟ್ಟಿ ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ. 418,79,252-65 ಇಪ್ಪತ್ತು ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ. 6,30,000-00 ಸದರಿ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ ಪೂರ್ಣಗೊಳಿಸುವ ಅವಧಿ 06 ತಿಂಗಳು. ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ದೇವಾದಾಯಪಡೆಯಾಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ನೋಂದಾಯಿಸಲ್ಪಟ್ಟಿ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರು/ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಗಳು "ಇ-ಟೆಂಡರ್" ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in ರಲ್ಲಿ ಸ್ಟ್ಯಾಂಡರ್ಡ್ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಡಾಕ್ಯುಮೆಂಟ್ಸ್ Standard Tender Documents KW-4 Clause-3 (with latest amendments) ಅಡಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಅರ್ಹತೆ ಪಡೆದಿರುವ ಶಾಂತಿಕ & ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ದಾಖಲೆಗಳನ್ನು ಸ್ವೀಕರಿಸುವ ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ:09.04.2026 ರಂದು ಸಂಜೆ 5-00 ಗಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ, ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ:13.04.2026 ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11.30 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ, ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ:16.04.2026 ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11.30 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ ನಿಗಧಿಪಡಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪತ್ರಗಳು ದಾಖಲು ನಿಬಂಧನೆಗಳಿಗಾಗಿ ರಜಾ ದಿನಗಳನ್ನು ಹೊರತುಪಡಿಸಿ ಸಮಿತಿ ಕಛೇರಿ ವೇಳೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಅಥವಾ www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಪಡೆಯ ಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ. ಟೆಕ್ನಿಕಲ್ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಾಗಿ ಮೇಲ್ಕಂಡ ಕಛೇರಿ ವೇಳೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಸರ್ಕಾರಕ್ಕೆ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ. ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಯಾವುದೇ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಯಾದಲ್ಲಿ ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾತ್ರ ಪ್ರಕಟಿಸಲಾಗುವುದು.
ಸಹಿ/-ಕಾರ್ಯದರ್ಶಿ, ಕೃ.ಉ.ಮಾ.ಸ. ಮದ್ದೂರು
ಸಹಿ/-ಆಡಳಿತಾಧಿಕಾರಿ, ಕೃ.ಉ.ಮಾ.ಸ. ಮದ್ದೂರು

TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS:TIRUPATI TIRUPATI DIST., A.P.
Office of the chief Engineer **TENDER NOTICE**
ADV No.69/D3/CE/TTD/2025-26 & NIT No.55 /SE-III /TTD/ 2025-26 dt:09-03-2026
Name of work: 1) Construction of Sri Padmavathi & Sri Andal Sametha Sri Venkateswara Swamy Temple at Karimnagar, Telangana State. **Amount : 2000.00 Lakhs, Time for Completion: 18 months.**
Note: For full details log on to the Website https://www.tirumala.org.
TTD-40021/10/2025 - PRO SEC (Adv. No 431). Date - 11.03.2026 **Executive Officer**

KARNATAKA FOREST DEPARTMENT
Office of the Principal Chief Conservator of forest (Head of Forest Force) Aranya Bhavan, 18th Cross, Malleswhwaram, Bangalore-560003.
No.: KFD/HOFF/PUB(GEL)/2/2025-CI-KFD Date:11.03.2026
Tender notification for engaging agency for handling Social media sites / handles, publicity awareness activities of Karnataka Forest Department
The Karnataka Forest Department (KFD) has published e-Tender No: KFD/2025-26 Dated: 10-03-2026 in the Karnataka public procurement portal of Government of Karnataka, for engaging agency for handling Social media handles, publicity and awareness activities of Karnataka Forest Department.
The e-tender No. KFD/2025-26/SE1453 dated: 10-03-2026 can be accessed through **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** interested bidder may download the detailed tender notification from the Karnataka public procurement portal. The last dated for Submission of tender is **27-03-2026 at 5.30 PM.** The technical bid will be opened on **30-03-2026, 5.30 PM** and financial bid will be opened after completion of evaluation of technical bid.
Sd/-
Addl. Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (Publicity & ICT)
DIPR/CP/JA/6178/2025-26

PUNJAB UNVEILS NEW INDUSTRIAL & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT POLICY

THE INDUSTRIAL & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT POLICY 2026, UNVEILED BY PUNJAB CHIEF MINISTER BHAGWANT SINGH MANN, ON MARCH 7, AIMS TO POSITION THE STATE AS THE COUNTRY'S LEADING INVESTMENT DESTINATION

In a landmark initiative, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann on March 7 unveiled the Industrial & Business Development Policy 2026, a comprehensive policy framework aimed at accelerating industrial growth, attracting large-scale investment and expanding employment opportunities across the state. Launched in Ludhiana ahead of the Progressive Punjab Investors' Summit 2026, scheduled to be held from March 13 to 15 at Plaksha University in Mohali, the policy introduces a flexible incentive architecture that allows investors to customise incentive packages according to sector-specific requirements and project scale. Addressing an audience of nearly 200 industrialists and business leaders, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said the state government has fundamentally restructured its industrial policy to make Punjab a more competitive and investor-friendly destination. Punjab has already been witnessing a surge in investment momentum. Since 2022, the state has attracted investment proposals worth Rs. 1.55 lakh crore, including Rs. 55,000 crore in the last year alone. Several major companies, including Tata, Infosys, Vardhman, Trident, HMEL and Fortis, have either announced new projects or expanded their investments in the state during this period.

REGIONAL AND SECTORAL PUSH

- 25 percent additional incentives for nine thrust sectors
- Enhanced incentives for industries in border and Kandi regions
- Key districts covered include Pathankot, Gurdaspur, Amritsar, Ferozepur and Fazilka

INVESTORS ALLOWED TO CHOOSE THEIR OWN CUSTOMISED INCENTIVE FRAMEWORK

Punjab has launched one of the most progressive industrial policies in the country as investors can choose incentives suited to their business model. The investor-driven incentive structure allows companies to select up to 20 incentives and design customised packages aligned with their business models. The Chief Minister said the approach recognises that different sectors operate with distinct cost structures and investment cycles. Industries such as pharmaceuticals, electric vehicles, textiles and data centres require different forms of support, he said, adding that the policy allows companies to optimise incentives based on their operational realities and investment scale.

Another major reform is the introduction of capital subsidy support, marking the first time Punjab has offered such assistance. The policy also extends incentives to existing industrial units undertaking modernisation, expansion or capacity augmentation, a departure from earlier policies that largely focused on attracting new investors. The move is expected to benefit manufacturing clusters in cities such as Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Batala and Gobindgarh, where many businesses operate as small and medium enterprises.

- Employment Generation Subsidy threshold reduced to Rs. 25 crore investment and 50 workers to support smaller industries
- Investors can choose up to 20 incentives to create customised incentive packages

FOCUS SECTORS WITH DEDICATED POLICIES

■ IT and ITeS ■ Global Capability Centres ■ Electric Vehicles ■ Electronics System Design and Manufacturing ■ Semiconductors ■ Filmmaking ■ Tourism

INVESTMENT MOMENTUM IN PUNJAB

- **Rs. 1.55 lakh crore** investment proposals since 2022
- **Rs. 55,000 crore** attracted in the last year

In a further effort to enhance long-term investment viability, the government has extended the incentive support period to up to 15 years, longer than the five-to-ten-year support windows offered by many states. The extended duration is particularly relevant for capital-intensive sectors such as semiconductors, pharmaceuticals, electronics manufacturing and data centres, where projects typically involve longer gestation periods. The policy also expands the definition of Fixed Capital Investment, which forms the basis for calculating incentives. Investments in land, labour housing, research and development facilities, effluent treatment plants, sewage treatment plants and zero liquid discharge systems will now be included in the incentive base. The government believes this will encourage companies to invest in sustainable and compliant infrastructure.

Punjab has also introduced additional incentives for investments in border and Kandi regions, which historically have received lower levels of industrial investment. Districts such as Pathankot, Gurdaspur, Amritsar, Ferozepur and Fazilka will be eligible for enhanced support in order to encourage new projects in these areas.

Speaking at the event, Power, Industries & Commerce and Investment Promotion Minister Sanjeev Arora invited domestic and global investors to participate in the Progressive Punjab Investors' Summit 2026, where the state will showcase new investment opportunities and its evolving industrial ecosystem.

> *"The policy represents a major shift in the way industrial incentives are structured in Punjab. Every other state in India hands investors a fixed menu and says take it or leave it, but Punjab has changed that. Now an investor can pick up to 20 incentives and build a package around their own business model."*
>
> **— Bhagwant Singh Mann**
> *Chief Minister, Punjab*

PPIS 2026 to act as catalyst for industrial growth

TOP INDUSTRIAL GIANTS FROM ACROSS INDIA AND THE WORLD TO ATTEND SUMMIT TO FIRM UP INVESTMENTS

Punjab is set to witness the biggest investment summit in the state's history. Scheduled to be held from March 13 to 15, 2026, at Plaksha University in Mohali, the Progressive Punjab Investors' Summit (PPIS) 2026 will bring together global and domestic investors, policy-makers, industry leaders and innovators to explore opportunities across sectors such as manufacturing, agriculture, food processing, IT, renewable energy, electric mobility and industrial parks. The summit is expected to act as a catalyst for further accelerating industrial development in the state, which has already emerged as a preferred investment destination. Through plenary sessions, sector-specific deliberations, B2B and G2B meetings, and exhibitions, the event will showcase Punjab's evolving economic landscape and emerging investment opportunities. The initiative also aims to position Punjab as a preferred industrial destination in North India, with a strategic focus on gradually transitioning from an agriculture-dependent economy to one driven by industry and manufacturing. Key sectors expected to be highlighted include advanced manufacturing, electronics, IT-BPM, agro-processing, renewable energy and electric mobility. Ahead of the summit, the state government took a major step towards strengthening its industrial growth trajectory with the launch of the Industrial & Business Development Policy on March 7, 2026.

For more information on the Summit, call: 0172 -5256401 or scan the above QR Code

A LANDMARK POLICY FOR A PROGRESSIVE PUNJAB

STRATEGIC INVESTMENT INCENTIVES
EXPANDED ELIGIBILITY & IMPACT
100%
Up to 100% FCI Incentives
Investors can now avail incentives totalling up to 100% of Fixed Capital Investment.
15 YEARS
15-Year Incentive Support Period
The duration for availing policy support has been extended to fifteen years.
First-Ever Capital Subsidy
Punjab has introduced a capital subsidy for the first time in state history.
Expanded Scope for Modernisation
Incentives now cover the modernisation and expansion of existing industrial units.
₹30 Lakh
30 Lakh Annual Freight Subsidy
Export support increased from Rs. 20 lakh to Rs. 30 lakh to boost global competitiveness.
Inclusion of Sustainability & Diversity
FCI definitions now include green infrastructure with extra incentives for inclusive hiring.
AI GENERATED INFOGRAPHICS.
PICS AND DATA BY PUNJAB DPR.

Policy focused on employment generation for Punjab residents

Punjab's Industrial & Business Development Policy 2026 places a strong emphasis on generating employment for residents of the state by widening access to employment-linked incentives. Under the revised framework, the eligibility threshold for availing the Employment Generation Subsidy (EGS) has been significantly reduced, with the minimum Fixed Capital Investment (FCI) requirement lowered from Rs. 250 crore to Rs. 25 crore and the employee threshold brought down from 1,000 to just 50 workers. The subsidy will be available only for Punjab residents, reinforcing the policy's focus on strengthening local employment opportunities.

Under the scheme, companies will receive a monthly employment subsidy of Rs. 3,000 per male employee and Rs. 4,000 per female employee. Higher support has been earmarked for knowledge-based sectors, with IT units eligible for Rs. 5,000 per employee per month and Global Capability Centres (GCCs) receiving Rs. 7,500 per employee per month. The state government expects the expanded subsidy framework to bring a larger number of small and medium enterprises within the incentive structure while encouraging companies to create more formal employment opportunities for the local workforce.

WOMEN-CENTRIC INDUSTRIAL PUSH

- Higher employment subsidy of Rs. 4,000/ month for women employees.
- Women permitted to work in night shifts with mandatory safety provisions by employers.

Ease of doing business with faster approvals and regulatory reforms

The new policy also introduces a set of reforms aimed at strengthening the ease of doing business environment and speeding up project implementation in the state. As part of the reforms, the government has adopted the new labour codes, a move aimed at simplifying compliance procedures and reducing regulatory burdens for industry. The policy brings in a streamlined approval mechanism, under which in-principle approvals can be granted through self-declaration within five to fifteen days, enabling faster commencement of projects. To further reduce delays, the government has introduced a system of deemed clearances, allowing proposals to move forward if approvals are not issued within the stipulated timeline. In addition, building bye-laws have been relaxed to enable better land utilisation, a step expected to facilitate more efficient planning of industrial projects. The reforms are aimed at creating a more predictable and business-friendly regulatory environment for investors looking to set up operations in Punjab.

Policy steps up support for startups with higher seed funding and a new innovation hub

Punjab's Industrial & Business Development Policy 2026 introduces a series of measures aimed at strengthening the state's startup ecosystem and encouraging innovation-driven enterprises. As part of the initiative, the government has enhanced financial support for early-stage startups and announced the creation of a dedicated hub to nurture entrepreneurial activity.

- Seed grant increased from Rs. 3 lakh to Rs. 5 lakh for early-stage startups.
- Second tranche of Rs.10 lakh introduced for continued support.
- Preferential Govt partnerships allowed for state supported start-ups.
- Kalkat Bhawan to be set-up as the Government of Punjab start-up hub.

CUSTOMISED PACKAGES FOR MEGA INVESTMENTS

- Tailored incentive packages for investments above Rs. 500 Cr.
- Customized package threshold for IT/ITeS investments set at Rs. 250 Cr.

ENVIRONMENT SUSTAINABILITY AT THE CORE

- Capital subsidy up to Rs.10 Cr for Zero Liquid Discharge (ZLD) plants.
- Capital subsidy up to Rs. 5 Cr for paddy-straw-based boilers.

RENEWABLE ENERGY ACCELERATION FOCUS

- Captive renewable power banking limit increased from 100% to 125%.
- Priority land allotment for renewable energy projects.

EXPANSION OF INDUSTRIAL LAND BANK

- New Private Industrial Park Policy notified to expand industrial land availability.
- Transparent e-auction system introduced for industrial plot allotment.

POWER SECTOR REFORMS

- Small power category expanded from 20 kW to 50 kW, lowering costs for ~90% of industries.
- Time-of-Day tariff rebate doubled from Rs.1 to Rs. 2 during non-peak hours.

Building a future-ready industrial economy

POWER SURPLUS CAPACITY, STRONG LOGISTICS INFRASTRUCTURE AND SUSTAINED GOVERNANCE REFORMS ARE REDEFINING PUNJAB'S INVESTMENT NARRATIVE

A structural recalibration is redefining Punjab's investment proposition as "Advantage Punjab" evolves into a competitiveness-led growth model anchored in governance reform, infrastructure strength and factor efficiency.

DIGITAL GOVERNANCE AND FASTER CLEARANCES

Through the Fasttrack digital ecosystem, investors benefit from a single-window, single-entry and single-exit mechanism supported by deemed approvals, advanced digital workflows and multi-level monitoring extending to district and state leadership. The framework enables faster decision-making, enhanced transparency and significantly reduced compliance friction, aligning with the expectations of modern investors.

POWER RELIABILITY AND COST COMPETITIVENESS

Punjab continues to remain a power-surplus state with installed capacity exceeding 14,613MW, supported by renewable and hydro sources. Reliable year-round electricity supply, transmission losses lower than the national average, and competitive industrial tariffs of around Rs. 5.83 per unit provide cost predictability for manufacturing, data-intensive industries and continuous operations.

LOGISTICS DEPTH AND MARKET CONNECTIVITY

Logistics competitiveness is reinforced by high road density, extensive national highway connectivity and access to both eastern and western dedicated freight corridors. Air connectivity through Shaheed Bhagat Singh International Airport and Sri Guru Ram Dass Jee International Airport, complemented by inland container depots, multimodal logistics parks and air cargo complexes, strengthens the state's position as a key distribution gateway for North India.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND WORKFORCE ADVANTAGE

Digital and physical infrastructure are expanding in tandem, supported by a strong optical fibre backbone catering to AI, IoT and electronics sectors. Nearly 70 percent of the population falls within the working-age bracket, offering a large pool of skilled and semi-skilled labour with competitive wage structures and stable industrial relations.

HIGH-IMPACT GROWTH CATALYSTS

- Strategic Location
- Food Bowl of India
- Successful Punjabi Diaspora
- Prosperous & Urbanised State
- Entrepreneurial Talent
- Ease of Doing Business & Governance Reforms
- Power Availability & Cost Competitiveness
- Logistics & Connectivity
- Digital & Physical Infrastructure
- Workforce & Labour Environment

Visvesvaraya Technological University
"Jnana Sangama"
Belagavi-590018, Karnataka, India

Ref. No. VTU/BGM/BAP/CW1/17/T-717/2025-26/6421 Date: 11-03-2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION

The Registrar, V.T.U., Belagavi invites (two cover systems) e-tenders for the following works through e-procurement tendering mode. **Name of work: Tender for Procurement of Desktop Computers, Laptops & Printers to Various Section/Centers of VTU Belagavi and UBDTCE, Davangere.** Amount put to tender: **Rs. 4,89,45,000/-, EMD Rs. 7,35,000/-**, Tender Pre-Bid Meeting Date **17-03-2026 at 11.00 a.m.** through online. **Last date for receipt of tender 10-04-2026 up to 2.30 p.m.** Date of opening of tender: **11-04-2026 at 4.00 p.m.** The details regarding participation in the e-Tendring can be accessed by logging to our VTU website: www.vtu.ac.in and e-procurement portal website **www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in.**

DIPR/BELAGAVI/2251/2025-26/DESHANDEPUBLICITY

Sd/-
Registrar

MAHARASHTRA METRO RAIL CORPORATION LTD.
(A joint venture of Govt. of India & Govt. of Maharashtra)

PUNE METRO RAIL PROJECT

A-3 Block, Beside District Court Interchange Metro Station, Shivajinagar, Pune-411005
Telephone: 020-26051072/ 74
E-mail: pdtender.pmpr@mahametro.org
Website: www.punemetrorail.org

EOI Notice No: P1PD-53/2026 Date: 12/03/2026

Name of Work: Expression of Interest (EOI) for Procurement, Operation and Maintenance of Feeder Buses on Select Feeder Routes for Pune Metro Rail Project.

Interested bidders may visit Pune Metro Rail website **www.punemetrorail.org** to view this EOI Notice and can download the EOI documents and obtain further details regarding the EOI from Pune Metro Rail Website **www.punemetrorail.org** from **17:00 Hrs. on 26/02/2026 to 16:00 Hrs. of 25/03/2026.**

General Manager (TP & Procurement -PD)
Maharashtra Metro Rail Corporation Limited

Pune Metro: City's Transport Solution

KRIBHCO
Cooperative and beyond...

KRISHAK BHARATI COOPERATIVE LIMITED

PRE-QUALIFICATION OF MANUFACTURERS FOR SUPPLY OF NEEM OIL, SEAWEED GRANULES

Applications are invited for pre-qualification of manufacturers for supply of

1. **Seaweed Granule on pan India basis.**
2. **Neem Oil for coating Urea at various ports located on Eastern & Western Coast of India.**

The applications may be submitted for any/both of above products. Tenders will be invited from pre-qualified manufacturers only. Interested manufacturer may visit our Website : **www.kribhco.net** and apply on-line with complete details as per prescribed format latest by **27.03.2026.** The hard copies of required documents shall be sent to :-

Deepak Kumar, DGM (TS)
KRIBHCO Bhawan, A-10, Sector-1, NOIDA-201 301,
Distt- Gautam Budh Nagar (UP)
Mob. 9818521338

KERALA CLIMATE RESILIENT AGRI VALUE CHAIN MODERNISATION PROJECT (KERA)

SPECIFIC PROCUREMENT NOTICE

The Project Director, Kerala Climate Resilient Agri Value Chain Modernisation (KERA) Project (The World Bank Project ID No.: P178254) invites expression of interest (EoI) for the following Request for Expression of Interest (REoI) from eligible consultants.

1. **Consulting services: Hiring of Agri-Finance Specialist**
   Last date of submission of EoI is 31st March, 2026, 2:00 PM.The tender Document can be downloaded from KERA website (**https://kera.kerala.gov.in/notifications**) starting from 10th March, 2025, 6:00 PM.

Sd/-
Project Director

KARNATAKA INFORMATION COMMISSION
Mahithi Soudha, Devaraj Urs Road,
Bengaluru-560 001. Phone: 080-22371958
e-mail ID: secy-kic@karnataka.gov.in

No: KIC/2025-26/SE0003 Date:27.02.2026

e-TENDER NOTIFICATION

Under the provisions of the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act, 1999 and Rules, 2000 the Karnataka Information Commission invites online tender through the Government of Karnataka e-Procurement Portal under a **Two-Cover System** for providing the following manpower services on an outsourcing basis.

Details of Manpower Requirement

Sl. No.	Category	No. of Posts	Last date for submission of Bids
1	Judgement Writers	18	28.03.2026 upto 5.30 p.m.
2	Stenographers	12	
3	Assistants	16	
4	Data Entry Operators	12	
5	Typists	11	
6	Law Assistants	07	
7	Drivers	13	
8	Group-D	27	
9	Watchman	04	

Tender Schedule: 1) Last date for submission of bids: **28.03.2026 upto 5.30 p.m.** 2) EMD Amount: **Rs. 3,70,000/-** (to be paid through the modes specified in the tender document via e-Payment) 3) Opening of Technical Bid: **30.03.2026 at 3.00 p.m.** 4) Opening of Financial Bid: **06.04.2026 at 3.00 p.m.**

- Detailed tender documents containing eligibility criteria, scope of work, terms & conditions and payment details can be downloaded from the Karnataka Government e-Procurement Portal https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in
- Interested agencies must be registered on the e-Procurement portal to participate in the bidding process.
- For technical assistance, contact Helpline Nos.: +91-9240214000 / +91-9240214001

Sd/-
Under Secretary
Karnataka Information Commission,
Bengaluru

MUNICIPAL CORPORATION CHANDIGARH

E-TENDER NOTICE

Sr. No.	Name of Work	Bid Submission Schedule (Online)	Opening Technical Bid (Online)
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER - Hort. Division No. 2			
1.	Operation and Watch & Ward of Fountains in various Green Belts/Parks at Various locations under the jurisdiction of SDE MCPH Sub Division No.19, Chandigarh under Revenue Head. Amount : Rs. 98,41,104/- Time Limit : 12 Months Earnest Money : Rs.1,96,822/- Tender Fee : Rs. 3000/-	08.03.2026 at 5.30 P.M To 18.03.2026 at 3.00 P.M.	8.03.2026 at 3.00 P.M.
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER - Roads Division No. 2			
2.	Repair/Renovation of water supply Govt. Houses Sector 20-C, Chandigarh. Est. Cost : Rs. 310.13 Lacs Earnest Money: Rs 6,20,256/- Time Limit : 12 Months	12.03.2026 to 19.03.2026 upto 12.00 noon	19.03.2026 at 12.00 noon
3.	Repair and renovation of Govt houses under the jurisdiction of road sub division no.8, M.C.,Chandigarh Est. Cost : Rs. 567.76 Lacs Earnest Money: Rs 11,35,515/- Time Limit : 12 Months	12.03.2026 To 26.03.2026 upto 12.00 noon	26.03.2026 at 12.00 noon
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER - M.C.P.H. Division No. 3			
4.	Desilting, Rehabilitation & Strengthening of existing 38" X 57" CBD Sewer Line with Structure Lining (CIPP Liner) at V3 Road Sector 45/46 in Chandigarh (Ch. to: Amrut 2.0) (Re-invited). Est. Cost : Rs.8,39,98,820/- EMD: Rs.16,79,976/- Tender Fee : Rs.5,000/- Time Limit: 06 Months	12-03-2026 To 25-03-2026 upto 01:00 P.M.	25-03-2026 at 06.55 P.M.

Note :- 1) Tender Notice alongwith detailed terms and conditions is available/uploaded on website at www.chandigarh.gov.in or etenders.chd.nic.in

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
Hort. Division No. 2, Roads Division No. 2 and M.C.P.H. Division No. 3, M.C., Chandigarh

---

BENGALURU SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT LIMITED
Office of the Deputy General Manager-3, 1st Floor, BBMP Building, Thimmaiah Road, Vasanth Nagar, Bengaluru-560052.

No.DGM-3/BSWML/TEND/24/2025-26 Date:11.03.2026

INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER (IFT)

(Only through GOK KPP Portal Only)

The Deputy General Manager-3, BSWML on behalf of the Managing Director, BSWML, Bengaluru invites the tender from eligible bidders for the works detailed in the table below. The Tender documents can be downloaded from the Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Website **(https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in)** on payment of prescribed fee noted against each item of work (non-refundable) in the form of e-Payment through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal. The Bidder shall submit the bid through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal. Other details may be seen in the bid document.

Sl. No.	Name of the work	Amount put to tender Rs.in lakhs (Excluding GST)	EMD (in Rupees)	Stipulated Period of Contract
1	Bio-Enzyme based Odour Suppression and Site Improvement Works in and around 5 processing plants in Yeshwanthapura Constituency, including allied infrastructure and operational support works.	7205.00	72,05,000.00	12 Months

Calendar of Events : (1) Last date to upload pre-bid queries: **20.03.2026 upto 15.00 Hrs.** in KPP Portal (2) Pre bid meeting: **23.03.2026 at 15.00 Hrs** at the office of CE & CGM-2 (Tech), BSWML, Thimmaiah Road, Vasanthanagar, Bangalore (3) Last date for submission of the bids: **06.04.2026 upto 16.00 Hrs** (4) Date of opening of Technical bids on: **07.04.2026 at 16.30 Hrs** (5) Date of opening of Financial bids will be notified to technically qualified bidders.

Sd/-
Deputy General Manager-3, BSWML

DIPR/CP/6193/SSC/2025-26

BENGALURU SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT LIMITED
Office of the Deputy General Manager-1, BSWML, 1st Floor, BBMP Building, Thimmaiah Road, Vasanth Nagar, Bengaluru – 560 052

No.DGM-1/BSWML/TEND/29/2025-26 Date:11.03.2026

INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER
(Through GOK KPP Portal Only)

The Deputy General Manager-1, Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited on behalf of the Managing Director, BSWML, Bengaluru invites bids from eligible bidders for the Services mentioned in the table given below

Sl. No.	Name of the Work	Amount Put to Tender (Rs.in Lakhs)	EMD (Amount in Rs)	Contract Period
1	Fly and Odour Control with Public Safety & Civic Improvement Works around Bellahalli, Bagaluru and Bayyappanahalli influence areas, along with basic infrastructure development works in Byatarayanapura Constituency.	7204.92	**Rs.1,00,000/-** through e-payment mode under of the following i.e., online / RTGS / NEFT / OTC and the balance **Rs.71,04,920/-** by Bank Guarantee/FDR issued by Nationalized / Scheduled Bank	11 Months

1) Last date to upload pre-bid queries in kpp portal: **22.03.2026** before **17:30 hrs.** 2) Tender Pre Bid meeting: **23.03.2026** at **15:00 hrs** at above mentioned office. 3) Last Date of Receipt of Tender **06.04.2026** before **16:00 hrs**. 4) Opening of Technical Bid: **07.04.2026** after **16:30 hrs**.

More details can be downloaded from website - **http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/-
Deputy General Manager-1,
BSWML, Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/6190/CCL/2025-26

HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE DEPARTMENT

ENGINEERING WING

Office of the Chief Engineer, Arogya Soudha, 3rd floor, Leprosy Hospital Premises, 1st Cross, Magadi Road, Bengaluru-560 023, Telephone No.080-29557023 E-mail:cekhsdrp@gmail.com

No:HFWD/EW/CE/TA-1&3/AE-3&6/Tnd/TLH/2025-26/4401 Date: 11.03.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION

The Chief Engineer, HFWD, Engineering Wing, Bengaluru invites tender from eligible Class-I contractors registered in KPWD in two tender document system in KPP Portal for the following works.

Sl. No.	Description of works	Approx. Amount put to tender (Rs. In Lakh)	EMD (Rs. In Lakh)	Stipulated period for Completion (including monsoon)
1	Construction of 100 bedded Taluk Level Hospital at Malur in Kolar District	3200.00	32.00	18 Months
2	Upgradation of 150 bed Kollegala Taluk Level Hospital to 250 bedded District Hospital at Kollegala, Chamarajanagara District.	3700.00	37.00	18 Months

Calendar of Events: (1) Last date for receipt of tenders: **13.04.2026 up to 16.00 hrs. (2)** Date of Opening of Tenders (Technical Bids): **15.04.2026 at 16.30 hrs.**

The tender details can be downloaded from the KPPP platform. Tenders shall be submitted electronically at **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** and Earnest Money Deposit and Tender Processing Fee shall also be paid electronically. Interested eligible contractors shall register on the KPPP platform to participate in this tender.

NOTE: (1) All the rights are reserved by the undersigned for postponement or cancellation of entire tender process, rejection of bids / individual bid etc., without assigning any reason. **(2)** Henceforth, any changes in the schedule / contents will not be published through newspapers and further changes will be updated only on KPP Portal.

Sd/- Chief Engineer, H&FWD, Engineering Wing, Bengaluru.

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD

INVITATION FOR TENDERS
(Through KPP Portal Only)

BWSSB invites tenders in two stage tender system from eligible contractors for the following works.

Sl. No.	Name of the Works	Amount put to Tender / EMD Amount
Office of the Chief Engineer (Design &QA), 9th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bangalore - 560 009.		
IFT No.: BWSSB/CE(D&QA)/ACE/TA/6248/2025-26		**Dt:09.03.2026**
1	Supplying and fixing of Borewell Automation Systems to various locations coming under AEE(BW&PS)-2-1 Sub Division (850 Nos.) Call-2.	Rs. 389.21 Lakhs / Rs. 5,83,900/-
IFT No.: BWSSB/CE(D&QA)/ACE/TA/6263/2025-26		**Dt:09.03.2026**
2	Supplying and fixing of Borewell Automation Systems to various locations coming under AEE(BW&PS)-1-3 Sub Division (875 Nos.)	Rs. 400.65 Lakhs / Rs. 6,01,000/-
IFT No.: BWSSB/CE(D&QA)/ACE/TA/6264/2025-26		**Dt:09.03.2026**
3	Supplying and fixing of Borewell Automation Systems to various locations coming under AEE(BW&PS)-2-3 Sub Division (850 Nos.)	Rs. 389.21 Lakhs / Rs. 5,83,900/-
IFT No.: BWSSB/CE(D&QA)/ACE/TA/6265/2025-26		**Dt:09.03.2026**
4	Sinking of 10 Nos. of 6.5 dia new borewell with necessary accessories at various locations of BTM Layout Constituency coming under AEE(BW&PS)-2-3 Sub Division.	Rs. 115.76 Lakhs / Rs. 2,00,000/-
IFT No.: BWSSB/CE(D&QA)/ACE/TA/6266/2025-26		**Dt:09.03.2026**
5	Procurement of Desktops for BWSSB Offices.	Rs. 209.48 Lakhs / Rs.3,15,000/-

For all the above works, Last date for receipt of tenders:**26.03.2026 upto 16:00 Hrs.** Technical bids will be opened on: **27.03.2026 at 16.00 Hrs.**

Sd/- Chief Engineer (Design & QA)

The details regarding the tender and participatin in the e-procurement process can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** For further details contact the above signed office during working hours.

DIPR/CP/JA/6183/2025-26

12001/47/2526

THE ODISHA STATE POLICE HOUSING & WELFARE CORPORATION LTD.
(A Government of Odisha Undertaking)
JANAPATH, BHOINAGAR, BHUBANESWAR - 22.
Ph: 0674-2541545, 2542921,
E-mail: ophwc.od@od.nic.in, Website: www.ophwc.com
e-procurement notice No.- 29/OPHWC/2025-26

INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

The **Chief Engineer (OSPH&WC)**, Odisha, Bhubaneswar invites Percentage rate bid in Double Cover system in **ONLINE MODE** only, for the works as detailed below:

1	Nature of work	:	Building works
2	No. of Works	:	10 Nos.
3	Value of Tender	:	Rs. 7.30 Cr. to Rs. 28.26 Cr.
4	Class of Contractor	:	'A' Class to 'Super' Class
5	Cost of Bid document (To be paid online)	:	Rs. 11,800.00
6	Availability of Bid Documents in the website	:	Dt. 13/03/2026 to Dt. 31/03/2026 up to 5.00 P.M
7	Last date/time of Receipt of Bids in the Portal	:	Dt. 31/03/2026 up to 5.00 P.M
8	Date of Opening Bid	:	Dt. 02/04/2026 at 10.30 A.M
9	Date of Technical Presentation (among qualified bidders only)	:	Date & Time will be notified after opening of the Technical Bid.
10	*The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can also be seen from the website: https://tendersodisha.gov.in. Any addendum/corrigendum/cancellation of tender shall not be published in Newspaper and can only be seen in the said website. *The Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids and terminate the tender process without assigning any reason thereof.		

Sd/-
Chief Engineer
(OSPH&WC)

N.B. - The quoted rate should be all inclusive but excluding G.S.T.as applicable Under works contract.

OIPR-12001/12025/1/25-26/0007

25001/313/2526

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER
RURAL WORKS CIRCLE: SUNDARGARH
AT/PO-SANKARA, SUNDARGARH-770020, E-mail address-serw_sundargarh@yahoo.com
No. Tender Online - RWCCESNG-39 of 2025-26, Letter No 1502 /Dtd. 07.03.2026

e-Procurement NOTICE

1. Type of the Work : Building Work
2. Class of Contractor : As specified in the column-6 of the Annexure
3. Time of Completion : As specified in the column-5 of the Annexure
4. Detail Projects : As per Annexure attached
5. Estimated Cost : As specified in the column-4 of the Annexure
6. Other details :

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender on-line for bidding From	Availability of Tender on-line for bidding To	Last Date & Time for Seeking Tender Clarification	Date & Time of opening of Tender: Technical Bid	Date & Time of opening of Tender: Financial Bid
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Sundargarh	RWCCESNG-39/ 2025-26	16.03.2026 11:00 AM	31.03.2026 5:00 PM	30.03.2026 5:00 PM	02.04.2026 11:00 AM	Will be intimated separately

Further details can be seen from the website **www.tendersodisha.gov.in**

Sd/-
Chief Construction Engineer
Rural Works Circle, Sundargarh

OIPR-25001/25133/1/25-26/0048

कार्यालय,
महाप्रबन्धक, पी0आई0यू0-03,
यू0पी0डी0सी0सी0एल0 देहरादून।

ई-निविदा सूचना

ई-निविदा सूचना 07/पी0आई0यू0-3/2025-26, दिनांक 11.03.2026

महाप्रबन्धक, पी0आई0यू0-3, यू0पी0डी0सी0एल0, देहरादून द्वारा निम्न कार्यों के निर्माण हेतु ई-बिड प्रणाली के माध्यम से ऑनलाईन निविदायें आमंत्रित की जाती है। उक्त निविदा हेतु वही ठेकेदार मान्य होंगे जो केन्द्र सरकार / राज्य सरकार या केन्द्रशासित प्रदेशों में कार्य की लागत की समकक्ष श्रेणी में पंजीकृत होंगे।

क्र0 सं0	कार्य का नाम	धरोहर धनराशि लाख रु0 में	निविदा प्रपत्र का मूल्य (रु0)	निविदा की वैद्यता अवधि	कार्य पूर्ण करने की अवधि
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Trivenighat Redevlopement (Rishikesh)	रु0 114.98 लाख	5000.00 + 900.00 (18% GST)	90 दिवस	18 माह
2	Construction of Chandrabhaga Pedestraian Bridge (Rishikesh)	रु0 50.09 लाख	5000.00 + 900.00 (18% GST)	90 दिवस	18 माह

निविदाओं से सम्बन्धित पूर्ण जानकारी हेतु उत्तराखण्ड सरकार की वेबसाईट www.uktenders.gov.in पर लॉगऑन करें।

(मनोज कुमार सिंह)
महाप्रबन्धक, पी0आई0यू0-3
यू0पी0डी0सी0सी0लि0, देहरादून

34001/164/2526

GOVERNEMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER, SOUTHERN (R&B) CIRCLE, BERHAMPUR
Phone : 0680-2281582, e-mail : ccescbam@gmail.com
INVITATIONS FOR BIDS (IFB) [e-Procurement]

Bid Identification No. CCE, S.C (R&B)-BAM-17/2025-26 No.677 Dated: 05.03.2026

1) The **Chief Construction Engineer, Southern (R&B) Circle, Berhampur** on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites **percentage rate bid** in double cover system in **ONLINE MODE** from eligible contractors for construction of **Building and Road works** as detailed in the table below.
2) Nature of work : Building and Road Works
3) No. of work : 05 Nos.
4) Tender Cost : Rs.10,000/- (online)
5) Class of Contractor : "B" Class / "A" Class / Special Class
6) Availability of Bid document in the website : 23.03.2026 10.00 AM to 06.04.2026 5.30 PM
7) Date of Opening of Bid : 07.04.2026 at 11.30 A.M.
8) The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website https://tendersodisha.gov.in.
9) Any addendum / corrigendum / cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website only.

Sd/- (Damodar Kaibartta)
Chief Construction Engineer,
Southern (R&B) Circle, Berhampur

OIPR-34001/34103/1/25-26/0028

Tamil Nadu Police Housing Corporation Ltd,
(A Government of Tamil Nadu Undertaking)
North Circle
No.1&7, Inspector quarters, PGR Line, Behind CPO Building, Annadhanapatty, Linemedu, Salem – 636 006.
email id: senctnphcl@gmail.com & spndengrnc.tnphcl@tn.gov.in, Phone: 0427-2903010

e- tender Invitation for Bids No: 43/2025-2026 Dated: 11.03.2026

Name of Work	Approximate value of work in Lakhs
1. Construction of **1000 Nos. of beds Hostel facilities** with development works for Girls Students Pursing Higher education at **Government Polytechnic College Campus** in **Coimbatore** District. (SE / NC / DB / 649 / 2026)	₹ 2622.20 + GST @ 18%
1) For Tender documents, visit **https://tntenders.gov.in**	
2) Date and Time for downloading and submission of tender documents: **27.03.2026 from 12.00 Noon to 27.04.2026 upto 6.00 P.M**	
3) Date and time of opening of the e-tender: **29.04.2026 at 11.15 A.M**	
4) Detailed Tender Notice is available in the website **www.tnphc.com & www.tnpolice.gov.in**	

DIPR / 1740 / TENDER / 2026

Superintending Engineer, North Circle, TNPHC Ltd

34001/172/2526

Mail ID: - sepwdsbp@rediffmail.com

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER,
NORTHERN (R&B) CIRCLE SAMBALPUR
e-Procurement
BID IDENTIFICATION No CCENC (R AND B)/22/2025-26
No. 1177 Dtd. 07.03.2026

1. The **Chief Construction Engineer, Northern (R&B) Circle, Sambalpur** on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites **Percentage Rate** bids in double cover system **in ONLINE MODE** for the construction of **Road Works & Bridge Works** as detailed in the DTCN from the eligible class of contractors.
2. No of works : **09 (NINE) (Road Works & Bridge Works)**
3. Tender Cost : **Rs. 10,000/-**
4. Class of contractor : **"A" Class and "Special" Class**
5. Date & Time of available in, web site & receipt of Bids From **18.03.2026 to 17.00 Hours of 02.04.2026.**
6. Date of opening of Technical Bid **04.04.2026 at 11.00 Hours.**
7. The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website **www.tendersodisha.gov.in.**
8. Any corrigendum / Addendum will be displayed in the website **www.tendersodisha.gov.in.**

Sd/-
Chief Construction Engineer
Northern (R&B) Circle, Sambalpur

OIPR-34001/34035/1/25-26/0026

32001/197/2526

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
Office of the Additional Chief Engineer
Rushikulya Bahuda Basin, Berhampur - 760004
e-mail id: se_sicbam@yahoo.com
e-Procurement Notice No. ACE, RBB-07/2025-26

1. Type of Work : Canal Lining works.
2. Total No of Work : 01 (One) No.
3. Amount put to tender : Rs. 842.19 Lakh
4. Period of completion : **12 (Twelve)** calendar months
5. Class of Contractor : **"A" & "Spl."**

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Name of Work	Bid Amount (Rs. in lakh)	Availability & Submission of Bid On-line
Additional Chief Engineer, Rushikulya Bahuda Basin, Berhampur	ACE, RBB(BEID) - 09/2025-26	Improvement to Hiradharbati Main Canal including renovation of structures in between RD 23.00Km to 41.18Km of Hiradharbati Irrigation Project.	842.19	From 17.03.2026, 10.00 A.M. to 02.04.2026, 5.00 P.M.

Date of opening of the Technical Bid: **04.04.2026 at 11:30 A.M.**
Further details can be seen from the Govt. website **www.tendersodisha.gov.in**

Sd/-
Additional Chief Engineer
Rushikulya Bahuda Basin
Berhampur

OIPR-32001/32411/1/25-26/0008

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

TAMIL NADU STATE HIGHWAYS AUTHORITY (TANSHA)
INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING.

NOTICE INVITING BID.

Notice No. 05, TANSHA/ OCIC-PH-1 / 2026 / Dated: 10.03.2026.

For and on behalf of Governor of Tamil Nadu Bids for the following works is invited by the, Member (Technical), Tamil Nadu State Highways Authority (TANSHA), Chennai-25.

Construction of Four Lane Highway with service roads for 1. Valayakkaranai to Pazhaveri, 2. Pazhaveri to Pulivoy and 3. Pulivoy to Manampathy on the section of Proposed Industrial Corridor of Cheyyar SIPCOT on Hybrid Annuity Mode (HAM)-3 works.

All details regarding the Bid will be available online in the website **www.tntenders.gov.in** from **11.00 a.m (IST) on 27.03.2026 up to 11.30 a.m (IST) on 27.05.2026.** Any changes / corrections will be intimated in the website only.

DIPR/1713/TENDER/2026

TAMIL NADU STATE HIGHWAYS AUTHORITY
CHENNAI - 25

34001/186/2526

WORKS DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER
EASTERN CIRCLE (R&B), BALASORE
e-mail: seec_bls@rediffmail.com
Government of Odisha "e" Procurement Notice
Bid Identification No. CCEEC-21/2025-26
No: 2245 Dt: 10.03.2026

Nature of work : **Building and Road Works**
Number of works : **3 Nos. Building, 1 No. Road**
Amount put to Tender : **Rs. 257.27 lakh to 810.06 lakh**
Class of Contractor : **"B" & "A" Class.**
Date & Time of availability of bid document in the portal : **Dt. 12.03.2026 at 10:00 AM**
Last Date/Time of receipt of bid in the portal : **Dt. 26.03.2026 up to 05:00 PM**
Date of opening of bid : **Dt. 30.03.2026 at 11:00 AM**
Name & address of the Office inviting bid : **Chief Construction Engineer, Eastern Circle (R&B), Balasore**
The bidders have to participate in **ONLINE** bidding only. Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement portal **"http//tendersodisha.gov.in."** All future corrigendum will be available on ONLINE mode only.

Sd/- **Chief Construction Engineer**
Eastern Circle (R&B) Balasore

OIPR-34001/34026/1/25-26/0017

TIMES BUSINESS

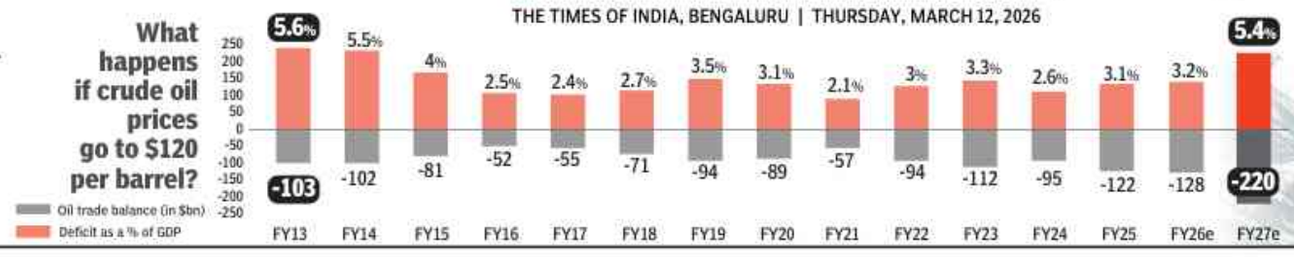
THE TIMES OF INDIA, BENGALURU | THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2026

Costly Oil To Strain India's Economy

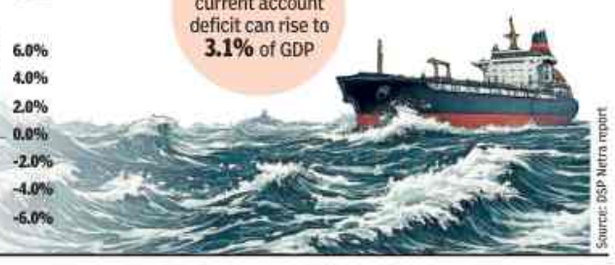
India imports most of its oil, so rising crude prices can quickly disturb the country's trade balance

- Petroleum **accounts for 25–30% of India's total imports**, making crude prices critical to the external balance
- Every $10 rise in crude **increases India's import bill by about $12–15bn annually**
- Past oil spikes have triggered **rupee depreciation, higher inflation and tighter liquidity**
- If oil averages **$120 per barrel, India's oil trade deficit could reach about $220bn**

What happens if crude oil prices go to $120 per barrel?



In case of **$120** oil, India's current account deficit can rise to **3.1%** of GDP



Source: DSP Netra report

Sensex Loses 5.4% Since Crisis Began On Feb 28 | Crude Up 4% Despite Reserve Release | Rupee Falls 23p Against Dollar

Wall St lower as investors look at oil, inflation data

Wall Street's main indices edged lower Wed, with the financials-heavy Dow leading declines as investors assessed a key inflation report and weighed the outlook for crude prices amid rising tensions in West Asia.

The International Energy Agency agreed to release an unprecedented amount of crude oil reserves in an attempt to temper soaring energy prices. However, crude prices jumped 4% as shipping through the strategic Strait of Hormuz is likely to be halted for a while. "The release of barrels is not a permanent fix," said Sam Stovall, chief investment strategist at CFRA Research.

The S&P 500 financials sector fell for the fifth-straight day and was last down 1.6% at its lowest since May. The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 481 points, or 1%, to 47,225, the S&P 500 lost 31 points, or 0.5%, to 6,750 and the Nasdaq Composite lost 58.9 points, or 0.3%, to 22,638. REUTERS

Intensifying West Asia war pulls sensex down 1.3k pts

Investors Poorer By ₹5L Cr, BSE's Market Cap Falls To ₹442L Cr

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai: As the prospect of a quick end to the war in West Asia thinned, sensex reversed with a 1,342-point slide on Wednesday to close at 76,864 points. The index is now down more than 10% from its all-time high of 86,159 points recorded intraday on Dec 1, 2025. Since the war between the US-Israel and Iran started on Feb 28, the index has lost 5.4%.

On Wednesday, the sensex opened slightly higher but selling started almost from the word go and through the session it slid to an intra-day low at 76,759 points. It closed just a tad above that mark, down 1.7% on the day. On the NSE, Nifty too took a similar path to close 395 points (1.6%) down at 23,867 points.

The day's session left investors poorer by a little over Rs 5 lakh crore with BSE's market capitalisation now at Rs 441.9 lakh crore.

Investors are now jittery from the rise in crude prices that nearly touched a high of $90/barrel again during the day. On Tuesday when there was some optimism about the end to the war—after a press conference by the US President Donald Trump where he hinted at a non-conflict solution to the issue—crude prices had crashed over 20% to below the $80 mark.

Market players and investors also were nervous as the rupee again weakened below the 92-per-dollar mark, after trading in the sub-92 level on Tuesday. Strong selling by foreign funds also weighed on the rupee, analysts and traders said. On Wednesday, foreign portfolio investors recorded a net outflow of Rs 6,267 crore from stocks, BSE data showed.

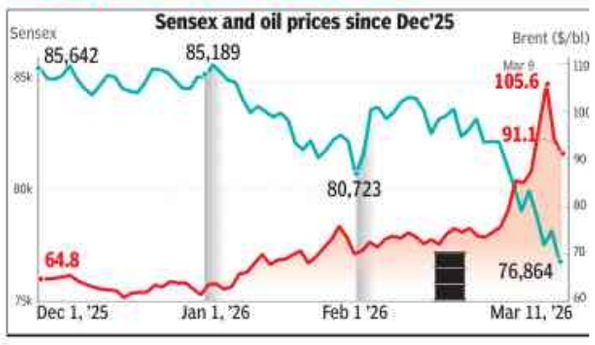
According to Siddhartha Khemka, Head of Research - Wealth Management, Motilal Oswal Financial Services, Indian equities are likely to remain volatile driven by developments in the West Asia conflict, sharp movements in crude oil prices and continuous foreign fund outflows.

"On Wednesday, markets resumed their downward trajectory after a brief rebound in the previous session, (due to) persistent foreign fund outflows," Khemka said.

"The decline was further aggravated by heightened geopolitical tensions in West Asia after the US and Israel launched some of their heaviest strikes on Iran, keeping investors cautious even as the US signaled the possibility of de-escalation. Investor sentiments may remain fragile as geopolitical tensions continue to weigh on global risk appetite." Among the 30 sensex stocks, 27 closed in the red, while three—NTPC, Sun Pharma and Power Grid—closed higher. HDFC Bank, Axis Bank and ICICI Bank contributed the most to the day's slide in the index, BSE data showed.

INDEX FELL 10% SINCE DEC HIGH, OIL ON BOIL

Sensex and oil prices since Dec'25



Rupee back below 92 against dollar

Mumbai: The rupee fell 23 paise to close at 92.04 against the US dollar on Wednesday, down 0.2%, as volatile oil prices and a sharp fall in domestic equities weighed on the currency. Intermittent dollar sales by state run banks on behalf of RBI limited the losses. Oil prices firmed above $90 per barrel after the US and Israel exchanged missile strikes with Iran. Fears of the latter attacking vessels in the straits of Hormuz worsened sentiment in the second half. TNN

'Gen Z must not panic amid volatility on D-St'

Market Observers Advise Young Investors To Hold Their Nerves As Sensex Surrenders Gains

Partha.Sinha@timesofindia.com

Mumbai: Gen Z investors who entered the markets during the Covid & post-Covid years are in panic mode. Having not experienced significant market corrections in their short investment journey, they are jittery looking at some red marks in their statements, indicating month-on-month fall in portfolio values.

They are also the ones who are regularly asking their financial advisors if they should take their money out of stocks and mutual funds, and put it in safer options like fixed deposits.

Contrast this with veterans, the seasoned long-term investors who have navigated sharp and brutal corrections like the global financial crisis (GFC in 2008-09), India's currency problem (2013) and the start of the Covid pandemic (March 2020). They are not trying to tweak their investments and are staying put.

Financial advisors and planners are assuring the Gen Z investing crowd that it's not the time to panic, rather they should stay put and give time to their funds to grow. Those with surplus funds are being advised to consider investing in a staggered manner, through the systematic investment plan (SIP) and systematic transfer plan (STP) routes.

According to planners, advisors and veterans of the market, history has shown that investors who panic when markets slide, rarely succeed in building wealth over the long run.

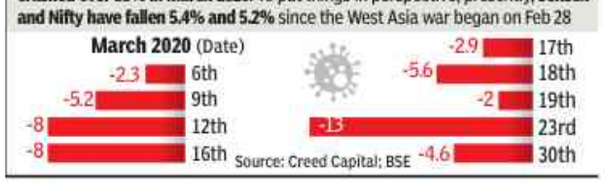
According to Pankaj Mathpal, founder, Optima Money, the newer set of investors were confident that markets and their investments would only go up. "But it's in the nature of the market that there would be periodic corrections," Mathpal said.

NAVIGATING TURBULENT TIMES

How sensex has performed during conflicts in last 25 years

Conflict	% change				
	+1 mth	+3mths	+6 mths	+1 yr	+3 yrs
9/11 (2001)	-6.6	8.5	14.4	-0.8	70.5
Iraq War (2003)	-6.5	9.6	32.1	70.5	242.7
26/11 (2008)	3.3	-0.8	50.5	90.5	73.9
US-China Trade War (2018)	4.3	8.1	11.6	15.6	50.8
Russia-Ukraine (2022)	5.6	-0.9	8.4	9	36.5
Israel-Hamas (2023)	-1.6	9.1	12	22.8	NA
Operation Sindoor (2025)	1.80%	-0.20%	3.10%	NA	NA
Iran-US Israel (2026)	-4.6	NA	NA	NA	NA

The **onset of Covid** saw intense volatility in the markets. **Sensex and Nifty crashed over 35% in March 2020.** To put things in perspective, presently, **sensex and Nifty have fallen 5.4% and 5.2%** since the West Asia war began on Feb 28



Analysts see stronger India-US energy ties

▶ Continued from page 1

AFR also said the "same global supermajor" had signed a 20-year agreement to purchase the refinery's output.

The project is also expected to help narrow India's trade surplus with the US, an issue that has long been a point of concern for Trump. "This is a historic $300 billion deal, the biggest in US history," read Trump's post on Truth Social.

According to AFR, the figure reflects the long-term offtake arrangement under which the global supermajor will purchase 1.2 billion barrels of shale oil valued at $125 billion and 50 billion gallons of refined petroleum products such as gasoline, diesel and jet fuel worth about $175 billion. Combined, the transactions are expected to improve the US trade balance by $300 billion, it said. Analysts noted that the actual equity investment in the refinery itself has been described as a "nine-figure" sum, implying several hundred million dollars, while the project valuation is in the "ten-figure" range, indicating that the capital commitment is likely to remain below $1 billion.

The Texas refinery will mark RIL's second greenfield investment outside India. In 2021, the company announced a partnership with Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) to build a $2 billion petrochemicals plant in the UAE.

Industry experts say the project could deepen economic cooperation between India and the US. M S Banani, joint managing director of Axiom Gas Engineering, a fuel station developer, said Texas is one of the world's most important energy hubs, hosting major companies such as Exxon-Mobil, Chevron, Shell and BP.

"Establishing a refinery there provides direct access to crude supply and one of the largest fuel markets globally," Banani said.

Infy canteen advisory takes effect today

▶ Continued from page 1

As you may be aware, we are amid an impending situation regarding availability of commercial LPG. Owing to this, our food-court operations will be realigned effective March 12. Certain offerings will be limited, including withdrawal of live counter options, until further notice," an advisory sent to the Bengaluru employees said.

At the Pune campus, some cooked food will be sourced from vendors' external central kitchens, while alternative cooking methods using electrical appliances and biofuel are being stepped up to manage the disruption. Employees have also been asked to avoid planning on-campus events that require internal catering and are encouraged to bring food from home wherever feasible.

In Chennai, the advisory noted that constraints in LPG supply have led to some food court items being temporarily unavailable or served in limited quantities. "A small adjustment at an individual level can collectively make a meaningful impact, and we truly appreciate your cooperation and understanding," the advisory said, adding the company is closely monitoring the situation and coordinating with LPG suppliers and food court operators.

Techies moonlight with freelance gigs as job market turns uncertain

Veena.Mani@timesofindia.com

Bengaluru: From young professionals to experienced developers, techies are increasingly taking up freelance assignments to supplement incomes and build alternative career paths as the industry grapples with slowing hiring, rapid advances in AI, and growing uncertainty around traditional tech roles. For some, these gigs are side hustles alongside full-time jobs — reflecting a rise in moonlighting — while others view them as a potential pathway to full-time independent work if the job market weakens further.

For Sharon Suresh, an engineering analyst with nearly a decade of experience, gig work has become a steady source of income. She earns around Rs 2,000 per hour for automation projects, working with clients as far away as Australia and Texas. Many of these assignments run for several months, allowing her to plan workloads and income more predictably.

Suresh says a large share of opportunities comes from smaller businesses that need help with digitisation but do not know where to find the right technical talent.

FREELANCER PAY MAP

ROLE	HOURLY RATE
Software enggr	₹800 – 8,000
Tech stack specialists	₹1,500 – 6,500
Data scientists	₹800 – 6,500
UI/UX & design enggrs	₹250 – 900
Business analyst	₹800 – 2,000

Source: ManpowerGroup

"When getting into gig work, it's important to know where the opportunities are. I stumbled upon a platform called Superprof when I was in college and signed up initially just to earn some pocket money," she said. "Through that, I realised many businesses need help with digital transformation but don't always know where to find the right talent. They turn to such platforms for freelancers, and there are plenty of well-paying projects available." Suresh said the flexibility of gig work has made it attractive for experienced developers as well.

At the other end of the spectrum are young professionals entering the workforce through freelance projects. D S Chinmayi, a final-year mechanical engineering student, began taking up freelance IT assignments to build her portfolio even before graduating. Over the past year, she has completed five projects. "I am a Mern stack developer," she said. A Mern stack developer creates complete web applications using four key technologies: MongoDB for the database, Express.js and Node.js for the server and backend, and React.js for building the user interface. This stack allows developers to manage both the front-end and backend of an application. "Through open-source platforms I got a project for which I was paid $3,000. That helped me bid for other clients. Early-stage startups often need someone to work on their tech stack. Many of the projects are short-term but they help someone like me build a foothold in freelance tech work," she said.

Meanwhile, hourly rates for IT gig workers vary widely depending on skills and project complexity. At student-focused gig platform TimbuckDo, the average pay for skilled gig workers ranges between Rs 850 and Rs 1,500 per hour. Roles involving deeper technical expertise or specialised tasks such as cybersecurity or testing tend to command the higher end of the pay spectrum. By contrast, entry-level design or basic development tasks typically fetch around Rs 450 to Rs 550 per hour as AI tools increasingly automate routine work.

"Designing or basic coding tasks are now easier with AI tools and no-code platforms, which has reduced demand for gig workers in those areas," said Mythri Kumar, co-founder of TimbuckDo.

Data from HR consulting firm ManpowerGroup shows freelance rates also vary significantly by skill and experience. Full-stack developers typically command between Rs 1,500 and Rs 6,500 per hour, while data scientists and analytics professionals earn roughly Rs 800 to Rs 6,500 per hour.

FDI rejig: Global investors with small Chinese stake likely to gain

Vaitheeswaran.B
@timesofindia.com

Chennai/ New Delhi: The changes in foreign direct investment (FDI) rules for China and other land bordering countries (LBCs) are expected to fast track investment by global investment firms, such as Blackrock and Carlyle, as they were feeling the heat of approvals required, even if there was a very small Chinese shareholding.

On Wednesday, the Union cabinet allowed for tweaks in Press Note 3, which in 2020 had kept all FDIs from China, Hong Kong and other LBCs out of the automatic route. Now, companies can get automatic approval for investment in India, where beneficial ownership of Chinese entities are under 10% and they do not exercise control.

"We are opening up in a strategic and calibrated manner... It's a changing world and the opening up doesn't mean that concerns with regards to security have gone away," Amardeep Singh Bhatia, secretary for department of promotion of industry and internal trade, told reporters.

He said that a detailed SOP, along with a list of product categories for faster approvals in strategic sectors will be released "as soon as possible". For sectors such as capital goods, electronic capital goods, electronic components, polysilicon and ingot-wafer, proposals will be cleared within 60 days, while ensuring that majority shareholding and control remains with resident Indian citizens or entities controlled by them. Rare earth and rare earth magnets are expected to be among the list of productions that will be notified by DPIIT.

Policy tweaks may unlock investment and technology tie-ups despite continued scrutiny of Chinese links

Easing of rules are expected to remove regulatory uncertainties that had stalled Indian joint ventures with Chinese partners since 2020, although it is not going to be easy for the Chinese majors, including BYD, to enter the market. With this, Indian companies are expected to easily access capital and process technologies, which are crucial for building a domestic ecosystem, as China currently dominates the global electronic manufacturing landscape.

J S Gujral, managing director of Syrma SGS, an electronics manufacturing services provider to global players, said: "Easing rules will enable technology partnership and bridge certain gaps in the domestic availability of components, specialised materials and advanced manufacturing know-how."

Cred goes cosmic, bets on astrology, relationship advice

Supriya.Roy
@timesofindia.com

Bengaluru: Fintech startup Cred is preparing to launch a new platform offering services such as astrology consultations and marriage counselling, according to people familiar with the development.

The platform, internally referred to as Circle, is expected to allow users to connect with experts for advice on relationships, careers and other personal decisions through the company's app, the people said.

If launched, the move would mark an unusual expansion for the Bengaluru-based company, which began as a credit card bill payments platform and has since evolved into a broader financial services ecosystem.

Founded in 2018 by entrepreneur Kunal Shah, Cred now offers unsecured personal loans, lending against mutual funds and vehicle insurance through its Garage platform. The company reported a 16% year-on-year increase in revenue to Rs 2,735 crore in FY25, while operating losses narrowed 51% to Rs 298 crore, according to company disclosures.

ASTRO PIVOT

Hints of a broader advisory-style product surfaced earlier this year when Shah wrote in a social media post that the company was "building something new" and curating "residents" who would share their time and judgement with Cred members. He said the founding residents would include experts across areas such as money, careers, relationships and wellness.

People familiar with the plans said services such as astrology consultations and marriage counselling are among the categories being explored within the Circle platform.

The move comes amid rapid growth in India's digital astrology and spiritual advisory market. Several startups have built large businesses by offering paid consultations with astrologers through mobile apps.

Online astrology platform Astrotalk, for instance, reported total income of Rs 1,214 crore in FY25, up 85% year-on-year.

The company connects users with astrologers through chat and voice consultations and hosts over 20,000 astrologers on its platform, underscoring the scale of demand for digital advisory services. Cred did not respond to queries seeking comment.

Tata Sons pays ₹17.6L monthly for Colaba bungalow

Bengaluru: Tata Sons has renewed its lease agreement with subsidiary Ewart Investments for a luxury bungalow in Colaba at a monthly rent of about Rs 17.6 lakh, according to documents sourced from property analytics platform Zapkey.

The property, The Cabins, has long-standing ties with the Tata Group and previously served as a residence for Ratan Tata. Documents show that Tata Sons is listed as the licensee. The bungalow has a super built-up area of around 13,200 sq ft and comprises a basement, ground floor and three upper floors. The agreement also includes an interest-free security deposit of Rs 10 crore. "This deal, combined with the state-of-the-art security and infrastructure upgrades outlined in the agreement, suggests the property may be getting ready for a high-profile occupant," said Zapkey founder Sandeep Reddy. TNN

Adani Energy raises $500mn bilateral debt from Apollo

A unit of Adani Group raised about $500 million through a bond privately placed with funds managed by Apollo Global Management, according to people familiar with the matter, highlighting the conglomerate's ongoing effort to tap funding outside the public dollar bond market.

A firm controlled by Gautam Adani-led Adani Energy Solutions. sold the 15-year private bonds with a rupee-equivalent all-inclusive cost of about 8.5%, and the company plans to use the proceeds to refinance existing dollar debt, said the people, who asked not to be identified because the information is private. The financing underscores the financing shift for Adani, historically one of the largest Indian issuers, as it borrows to fund ambitious capital spending plans while facing elevated borrowing costs in the public dollar bond market and the overhang of advancing legal risks from the US. BLOOMBERG

ABB invests in two new projects in B'luru

Bengaluru: ABB Group CEO Morten Wierod inaugurated Thursday an electrification and automation plant in Nelamangala in Bengaluru. He also led the groundbreaking of a new integrated facility in Peenya that will produce a broad range of its motion products including energy efficient motors and low-voltage drives. These projects are part of the $75 million investment that the Swiss-Swedish company has announced for India during 2026. The company said the investment will significantly expand its manufacturing footprint and R&D capabilities in India.

Sanjeev Sharma, MD at ABB India, said by strengthening its manufacturing and technology capabilities in Karnataka, the company is bringing advanced technologies closer to customers, enabling industries to improve energy efficiency and digitalise operations. TNN

A thought for today

If you destroy a free market, you create a black market

WINSTON CHURCHILL

On All Cylinders

Stopping LPG black market requires commercial supply restoration, market pricing, distributor audits

Officially, there's no shortage of LPG. Anecdotally, cylinders are selling for twice the official price. That means we have a black market in gas now. This is not surprising when LPG supply to commercial kitchens has been curbed. There's logic behind govt's order: until Strait of Hormuz reopens, or enough new suppliers are found, India's gas stock must meet essential needs first. But as we said yesterday, commercial kitchens are just as "essential" as home kitchens now. They employ lakhs and feed crores daily. If they can't get gas legally, other means will arise. Gas meant for homes will get diverted – illegally – creating problems all round.

Administrators should know this. As a nation, we grew up on shortages and black markets of all types. In 1970s, parents booked LPG connections for daughters at birth, and Bajaj scooters too. Because delivery took years. Rice, sugar, kerosene, cooking oil, everything was rationed till 1990s, and rations were sold at open market prices. That was common knowledge. Why do we have a 1970s situation in 2026? Supply shock is only half the answer. The bigger reason is disruption of free market. There's a reduced stock of gas, and a large, desperate commercial sector that can't get any. Ergo, black market.

A cold-hearted economist would let gas find its right price. But govt can't be cold-hearted. It can't ask poor domestic consumers to pay ₹400 or ₹500 more per refill. The market is less squeamish. It sees a gap, and demands a "scarcity premium". But this is risky work. Gas distributors and their agents face stiff penalties, if caught. So they demand a "risk premium" as well. Effectively, LPG ends up costing more in the black market than it would in the "white market", if govt let demand and supply determine price.

Irony is, the harder govt cracks down, the higher black market's risk premium will shoot. But if it doesn't crack down, it risks normalising the black market itself. So, here's what it must do. One, increase LPG production and purchase. Two, bite the bullet on gas price. It's not diesel, and won't stoke inflation the same way. Three, audit distributors and ask marketing firms to start online dashboards showing real-time stock at the gas agency level. Transparency is the best fix for anything black. Higher prices may be politically unpalatable, but at least the money will flow to PSU companies, who can buy more gas with it. It's a better outcome than enriching middlemen.

The I In Individual

Our liberties make us & society stronger. Groupthink doesn't. But state & even some courts don't get it

Harish Rana has been in a vegetative state for 13 years. All this while, his parents have loved him, cared for him. For years, they have also pleaded for permission to withdraw the tubes clinically feeding him. Yesterday, the Supreme Court finally came through for them. Remember, the court had ruled the right to die with dignity, as being folded within the right to live with dignity, in 2011, and again in 2018. That didn't save Rana's parents, from running around the medical and judicial establishments, exhaustingly. It was their choice – but they had to wait 13 years to exercise it.

Look around at our turbulent world, and you see that many countries are not big on individual freedoms. India is different. Its Constitution, written by a people emerging from colonial subjugation, acutely conscious of what the denial of freedom meant in practice, committed to a transformative agenda. And placed the individual citizen at the nation's core, rather than traditional hierarchies. But too often, practice falls tragically short of theory. Theoretically, an adult is free to love any other adult of their choice. In reality, khap panchayats, 'love jihad' laws, 'honour' killings, and countless busybodies, won't let lovers be. Likewise, a woman's bodily autonomy is strong on paper. But in reality, hostile doctors and judges can vamoose her right to abortion. Even something as basic as what food a person chooses to eat, can be restricted by govt fiat or mob fury.

In the two fast & furious centuries since John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor Mill's seminal text, *On Liberty*, was published, several weaknesses have been exposed in it. But this insight has held firm and true – that freedom of thinking is indispensable not just to make great thinkers, but also to enable average persons to become the best that they can be. If citizens cannot reach their potential, neither can the nation. If they cannot live in accordance with choices they make for themselves, is it even their own life? Often, the tyrant alone is portrayed as the enemy of liberty. But, suffocative public opinion does the job just as well.

Iran, Persia, and me

'Epic Fury' could learn from our real epic

Bachi Karkaria

How do we, Parsis, react to the insanity centred on our original motherland? Obviously, we never supported the regressive regime that in 1979 replaced our beloved Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi. *Arre*, so what if he used his own secret police, SAVAK, to *khatam karo* his opponents, almost as brutally as his successors did? Claiming he was descended from Persia's Zoroastrian emperors, Cyrus the Great, etc, didn't he also encourage young Parsis to return to the *madar-e-watan*, which we abandoned 1,000 years ago, to save our sacred *jarthosti dharam*, and not get forcibly converted to newfangled Islam?

Of course, we condemned Khamenei, who tortured and killed his people – who were once our people, no? But Trump's MAGAlomanic attack crossed all limits. *Saala, hadd thayi gayi*.

He called it 'Epic Fury'. Well, boss, let us tell you about our Persian epic, famed ages before your America was even named. The *Shahnameh's* most poignant story shows war's unexpected, and inestimable, price. Legendary warrior, Rustom, goes off to serial battles, leaving behind a pregnant Tahmina and an amulet, saying, 'If it's a boy, bind it upon him in token of his father.' It is, and she does, naming him Sohrab.

erratica

Decades later, in Iran-Turan war, the two are unknowingly locked in mortal combat. Rustom fatally wounds Sohrab, who warns him that 'my father will seek you out, even if you hide high as a star in the sky, or deep in the belly of the earth'. Intrigued, Rustom demands, 'Who is your mother, and what's your identification?' The dying son pushes up his sleeve, to reveal the jewel.

Or, take that other Shahnameh hero. Trump *seth*, don't imagine you are today's Shah Faredoon, who was anointed Athyawan' (the Righteous) for overthrowing the monstrous Zohak. Remember, for Iran, *America* is the 'Great Satan'.

As for the critical shipping lane, 'Hormuz' or 'Ohrmazd' is the Pahlavi word for our Supreme Being, 'Ahura Mazda'. In Avestan Persian, it meant Lord of Wisdom, a commodity dangerously lacking in both power-blinded parties.

***

Alec Smart said: "War is school for thought. But in war, there's little thought for schools. 😟"

America's RIL Deal, India's Real Deal

The project is geopolitical leverage for New Delhi. It fits into GOI's smart transactional approach: invest in US, buy Russian oil, clear Chinese FDI, talk to Iran, be pals with Israel. Be guided by ROI, not emotion

Somnath Mukherjee

"Buy when there's blood in the streets, even if the blood is your own." That gem is credited to Baron Nathan Rothschild, a member of the legendary, eponymous banking family. And that wasn't just a smart quip. He lived by it. The Baron invested while the Battle of Waterloo was raging. He profited handsomely after the war. Nor is Waterloo a unique case in history.

Geopolitical upheavals have invariably thrown up economic winners (and losers). WW2, the most devastating geopolitical event known to mankind, allowed US to overcome a biting depression, and emerge as the pre-eminent world power. It also allowed USSR to recover very quickly, from the extensive destruction it suffered, and emerge as a peer-competitor to US. The ensuing Cold War threw up several winners – most of East Asia as economic powers, and finally emergence of China, as a near-peer geopolitical rival to US.

As the world adjusts, somewhat violently at times, to a new geopolitical construct, there is literally blood in the streets (and some, though not yet a massive amount, in the markets). While India confronts, and adjusts to, day-to-day emergencies thrown up by moment, it is important we remain alive to opportunities such upheavals invariably throw up.

Image: AI

It's early days yet, and social media chatter threatens to overwhelm reasoned narratives these days, but it looks as if India is playing the new "great game", with a certain level of aplomb.

Yesterday, Trump took to Truth Social to announce a large petroleum refinery, the first greenfield refinery in US in 50 years, with a $300bn investment by Reliance Industries. While actual scale and timelines of such projects are hidden below political headlines, it's an interesting development.

Details are scanty yet. But, at a proforma level, it seems like a win-win. RIL runs perhaps the world's most complex refinery operation, with its Jamnagar refinery complex possessing a Nelson Complexity Index (NCI) of over 21. Such high NCI reflects the ability to process heavy sour crude (of the sort found in Venezuela, among other places).

This is an operation Reliance has perfected over decades, and it's precisely the skillset that US is missing (all of US refining operations are today predicated on refining light sweet crude). Such a project helps US build critical supply capabilities, precisely in an area most under disruption today, due to the war in Persian Gulf.

For India, such an investment, by an Indian company, builds the reciprocity quotient so embedded in Trumpian deal-making. A large Indian-owned refinery in America creates some "tariff insurance" today, while continuing to yield geopolitical leverage long after Trump is gone.

Yes, RIL is a private enterprise. But, globally, large private corporations are often considered to be an extension of the state. There's likely to have been enough back-channel official nudges and encouragement, given the deal's size and importance.

This isn't a one-off. The Trump-RIL announcement is part of a series of similarly interesting GOI decisions, taken in recent weeks. On Tuesday, rules for FDI originating from China were changed. Reversing a decision taken in 2020, in the aftermath of Galwan, these revised rules make it easier for Chinese companies to invest in India.

This is expected to ease the flow of technology and capital from China. Technology has become a bottleneck for many Indian companies, setting up new manufacturing capacity. Because global manufacturing supply chains are predominantly centred around China.

Last week, the media made much out of US carving out a "30-day sanction waiver" for India's Russian oil imports. But data tells a different story. India had imported over 20% of its monthly crude from Russia in Feb, before any US 'waiver'. India had, earlier, continued to buy discounted Russian oil, for as long as it was economically feasible, before effecting a partial scale-back, to facilitate a trade agreement with America.

Go back slightly earlier. On Jan 19, the entire UAE royal family was in Delhi, on a state visit. Modi was in Israel on a state visit on Feb 25. Iran's junior foreign minister was hosted in New Delhi, during the semi-official Raisina Dialogue. Three Iranian naval ships caught out in Indian Ocean were offered refuge (one, unfortunately, didn't make it to a port on time, but the other two did). All of these are illustrative, of an approach different to traditional policy. That's why GOI has refrained, so far, from issuing moral judgements on the Iran conflict.

India's keeping lines open with all sides. Choosing to tilt, when a side seems to be the winner, choosing not to speak out loudly, when self-interests are not at play. India's guiding principle is, judge the transaction on offer. Don't go by some abstract philosophy, or *friendship*, or a greater principle.

This is a classic financial trader's strategy, applied to statecraft – hedging where necessary, taking exposure where there is an opportunity, cutting losses quickly. Above all, diversifying aggressively, with no emotional commitment to any position.

This is elite level policymaking, in a disturbed world. Of course, that's not enough by itself. Hard power needs to be built up, and that requires different kinds of state interventions.

But, such smart statecraft is a necessary condition for India, if it wants to capture opportunities emerging out of global disruptions.

The writer is Chief Investment Officer of an asset and wealth management firm. Views are personal

Chinese Checkers & Trump's Iran War

Beijing doesn't necessarily want an Iranian victory. Ideally, it would like the conflict to drain US resources, preserve a weakened Tehran regime, and protect Chinese regional economic interests

Anushka Saxena

In the prevailing logic of great power competition, Iran seems to have a valuable function for China. For every dollar US spends, defending commercial shipping lanes in Red Sea, from Houthi anti-ship missiles, and for every multi-billion-dollar carrier strike group tethered to Persian Gulf, to deter Iranian aggression, there's resource unavailable for deployment in Indo-Pacific.

Some may argue, Beijing is deliberately manufacturing a quagmire for US. The deeper insight is this: China is free-riding on US military's provision of security in Persian Gulf and Red Sea, securing Beijing's sea trade with Gulf countries, but it's doing just enough to keep Washington's resources bogged down. Covert support for Houthis, or Iran's IRGC, is an example of the latter.

This geopolitical calculus, however, has distinct limits. China's grand strategy in West Asia demands balancing. Beijing's commercial relations with Gulf states, and even Israel, are more lucrative than its ties to Iran. The current war directly hinders this balancing. Iran's retaliatory strikes against Gulf, for example, endanger 1mn Chinese expats in West Asia, $50bn-plus investment in regional BRI infra, and the broader stability of global energy markets. So, China is stuck in a loop, where it both applauds Tehran's firm response, but also sees the damage it can cause.

The near-closure of Strait of Hormuz – imposed in part by Iran itself – risks triggering a global oil shock, with consequences for the Chinese economy. This is true, even if, as rumour has it, the Strait remains open for Chinese vessels. 20% of the world's total oil trade, and much of China's oil imports coming in from West Asia, transit through the Strait. If suppliers refuse to insure ships, and warring parties ignore safety of commercial shipping, then economic security is not guaranteed for anyone.

Hence, while Beijing benefits from US-Iran friction, the current conflict may not be serving its best interests.

Beijing's language around the need to "prevent the spread and spillover" of conflict, and its latest decision to appoint a 'special envoy' for 'Mediation in Middle East', are notable.

In Iran's leadership structure, as it stands today, Ali Larijani seems to have emerged as a central figure. Reinstated as secretary of Supreme National Security Council, Larijani is the primary architect of the Iran-China relationship, having championed the 25-Year Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. But there's no official confirmation on whether China's foreign minister, Wang Yi, and Larijani have had consultations. Wang has reiterated China's support to Iran's foreign minister, Abbas Araghchi.

Going forward, if and when the conflict enters a protracted phase, China's playbook is likely to be that of business over bullets. Beijing will, rigorously, avoid direct military confrontation with US. It will utilise the crisis to deepen Tehran's dependence on it, while, simultaneously, attempting to contain the conflict's scope and spread.

Image: AI

On the diplomatic front, it's likely to leverage its institutional weight within UNSC, SCO, or even the expanded Brics, to construct a diplomatic firewall for Tehran.

China could also veto, or abstain, from any UN resolutions seeking to impose new international legal mandates, or Chapter VII authorisations, against Tehran. Its foreign affairs corps will – as they already are – aggressively frame the US-Israeli campaign as an illegal, destabilising war of aggression, that blatantly violates UN Charter, while portraying China as a "responsible major power".

In the military domain, China will absolutely refrain from defending Iran, or establishing formal defence ties. Doing so would invite US secondary sanctions. Instead, China will employ a strategy of indirect military augmentation, designed to raise costs of US operations, without crossing the threshold of direct belligerency.

Perhaps, the clandestine transfer of CM-302 – supersonic anti-ship cruise missiles that, per *Reuters*, Iran was looking to acquire before outbreak of war – will be accelerated, and covert logistical pipelines will be established, to deliver kamikaze drones and MANPADS, necessary for Iran to rapidly repair and replenish its inventory.

These are defence transfers China has not just refrained from commenting upon, but whose existence it has actively refuted.

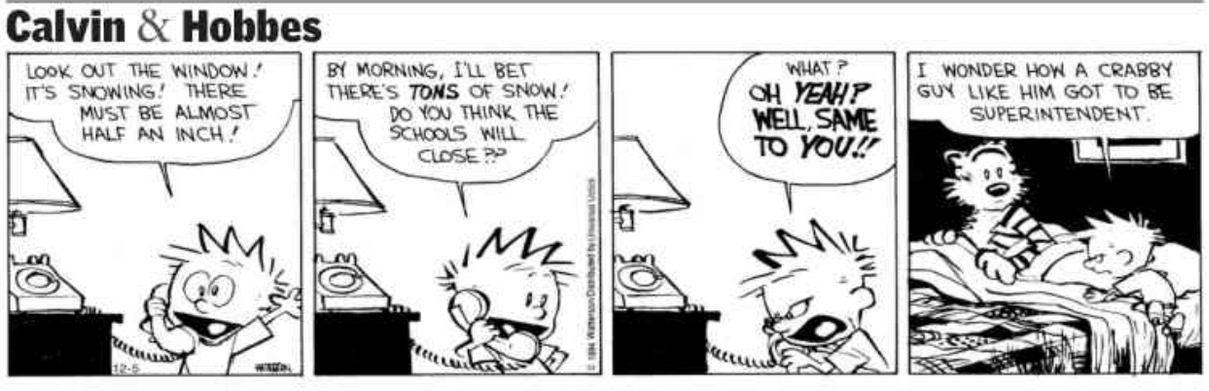
Economically, China will most likely utilise the crisis to capitalise on Iran's need for revenue, to fund its war effort. This could include Beijing seeking even more favourable, deeply discounted, long-term contracts for Iranian crude oil. It may also be that, as we speak, Beijing is exerting pressure on Larijani, the IRGC command, and even some open ears in Trump's administration, to ensure safe passage in Hormuz.

Finally, on the nuclear front, China will strongly oppose any Iranian move towards rapid enrichment and armament. Beijing recognises that if Tehran goes nuclear, there will be more West Asian conflicts. Ultimately, China's objective would not, necessarily, be to ensure decisive Iranian military gains against US and Israel.

Beijing's best case scenario is either a draining stalemate, or an immediate cessation of hostilities, provided either option preserves the Iranian regime, preferably weaker and more beholden to China.

The writer is a staff research analyst with Takshashila Institution

Calvin & Hobbes


LOOK OUT THE WINDOW! IT'S SNOWING! THERE MUST BE ALMOST HALF AN INCH!
BY MORNING, I'LL BET THERE'S TONS OF SNOW! DO YOU THINK THE SCHOOLS WILL CLOSE??
WHAT? OH YEAH? WELL, SAME TO YOU!!
I WONDER HOW A CRABBY GUY LIKE HIM GOT TO BE SUPERINTENDENT.

Sacred*space*

Fantasy is escapist, and that is its glory. If a soldier is imprisoned by the enemy, don't we consider it his duty to escape?...If we value the freedom of mind and soul, if we're partisans of liberty, then it's our plain duty to escape, and to take as many people with us as we can!

JRR Tolkien

Aspire For And Curate The Great Escape

Narayani Ganesh

How can you sleep so soundly when my business has crashed and i am worried sick, yelled a husband at his spouse, who was trying to 'escape' into oblivion. Apart from the fact that she needed to rest and get energised to function the next day both at her workplace and home, shutting out the world and going to sleep was an escapism she needed, to wriggle free of gloom. Every one of us found some way or other to survive the pandemic-induced lockdowns, either by catching up on reading and writing, getting entertained by OTT channels, learning a new craft or skill, or simply renewing friendships, virtually. Escapism, yes, but it was necessary to help us tide over external world realities that were 'killing' us.

Watching the recently released film *Dhurandhar* with two of my older sisters – a film themed on gang warfare, terrorist killings, and conflicts – it was amusing to observe their diametrically opposite reactions. "Shut it, shut it," pleaded the oldest, "why watch all this gore and violence? Don't we have enough of these in our lives? Let's watch a happy, romantic, Christmassy movie!" The other, glued to the screen, protested: "Hey, don't change the channel, it is so gripping, these things really happened, you know!" While one sought to escape 'reality', the other wanted to experience it, vicariously.

What is meant by escapism? One explanation is that "escapism is mental diversion from unpleasant aspects of daily life. Escapism also may be used in relation to activities involving imagination or entertainment. Escapism may refer to things that one does to occupy oneself to get away from persistent feelings of depression or general sadness." You may wish to escape family pressures, a cloying relationship, workplace stress, a looming pandemic, imminent war, worldwide shortages of essential items – anything that disturbs you, in the 'real' world.

THE SPEAKING TREE

It follows, therefore, that in order to escape, one needs to suspend disbelief and enter the world of fantasy. Fall down into a rabbit hole as Alice in Wonderland did. Find an escape chute.

This brings us to more metaphysical questions, what is real and what is unreal? Is the reality we are seeking escape from, real? Is our mode of escapism, real? Are we running away from harsh truths instead of facing those challenges? Are we in hiding, avoiding anything distasteful?

When Alexander the Great visited Diogenes and asked whether he could do anything for the famed teacher, Diogenes replied: "Only stand out of my light." I don't suppose he meant it as a rude remark; he was merely stating a fact, also a metaphor for letting people experience their inner light that is sometimes obstructed by others, and often, by the individual himself. Can you stand aside and let yourself get illumined without having to resort to 'escapism'?

There are two kinds of escapism. One, escaping from the material world of disturbing reality. The other escape is what we could call the Great Escape – breaking free of shackles, including escaping from reality – that prevent us from finding ourselves, from experiencing the inner you that can shine a light on a beautiful path that can take you on an incredible journey to the Self – the ultimate therapy, the ultimate release. You can curate your own Great Escape.

ganeshnarayani@yahoo.com

Krishnachand.K@timesofindia.com

How Sanju's fisherman grandpa shaped his cricketing journey

The T20 World Cup's Player of the Series was shaped by his coastal upbringing, and guided by his fisherman grandfather's lessons on resilience and family support. It all helped him grow as a calm, grounded cricketer admired for hard work and humility

For Sanju Samson, the rhythms of cricket have always carried an echo of the sea.

Long before he became a familiar name in Indian cricket, the ideas that shaped his outlook on success and failure were formed far from stadium lights — in the fishing hamlet of Vizhinjam, on Kerala's southern coast. There, amid the daily departures of boats and the unpredictable moods of the Arabian Sea, Sanju absorbed lessons of grit and perseverance that would later guide him through the uncertainties of professional sport.

At the centre of those lessons was his maternal grandfather Anthonis, a fisherman whose life revolved around the ocean.

Sanju, who lived near Anthonis, watched him and other fishermen push their boats into the water before dawn. Some days the nets returned heavy with fish; on others, they came back almost empty. But the next morning, the boats would head out again.

That cycle of hope, disappointment and persistence left a deep impression on the young boy. "You can't control the sea," Sanju has often recalled his grandfather saying. "You can only control how prepared you are when you go out. Some days you come back with nothing, but you still wake up the next morning and go again."

Years later, as Sanju navigated the highs and lows of international cricket, those words would return to him with striking clarity.

Anthonis was not a man of grand gestures. Life at sea had hardened him, teaching him to face storms and setbacks without complaint. He did not indulge his grandson with gifts or cricket equipment. Instead, he passed on something more enduring: resilience, humility and the ability to remain grounded, regardless of success.

Those values became particularly meaningful during the early stages of Sanju's cricket career.

Like many cricketers trying to establish themselves, he experienced both promise and disappointment: maybe a sparkling innings followed by a string of failures; or opportunities sometimes slipping away as fast as they appeared.

Whenever the young batter felt discouraged, his grandfather had a simple way of explaining things. A poor score, he would say, was like returning from the sea with empty nets. It happens. What matters is going back the next day. The greatest also fail sometimes, he reminded his grandson — even legends such as Sachin Tendulkar.

As a child, Sanju was also captivated by his grandfather's stories about life on the ocean. There were tales of sudden storms, narrow escapes and long nights at sea — stories that stirred his imagination. Those memories remain vivid.

Sanju was born Nov 11, 1994, in Pulluvila, a coastal village near Vizhinjam in Thiruvananthapuram district. The region has long harboured a fishing community, where the rhythm of daily life is closely tied to the sea. Today, Vizhinjam is widely known for the massive Vizhinjam International Seaport project that is transforming the once-quiet town into a major global shipping hub. But during Samson's childhood, it was a modest coastal settlement.

Sanju Samson (left) and his brother, Saly, with their mother, Lijy Samson

Locals cheer Sanju Samson during the T20 World Cup

Sport, however, was also deeply embedded in the Samson household.

His father, Samson Viswanath, served as a constable in Delhi Police and had represented Delhi in Santosh Trophy football. A disciplined sportsman, Viswanath encouraged his son to pursue sport seriously.

He noticed Sanju's early fascination with cricket and remembers the doubts his son had after returning from Delhi, pointing out how the family never allowed uncertainty to overshadow his talent. "Sanju wondered whether he could really pursue cricket seriously from here," he recalls. "I told him talent does not depend upon the city you live in. What matters is hard work and belief. If he continued to train sincerely, opportunities would come one day."

Sanju spent part of his childhood in a police residential colony in North Delhi, where his father was posted. He studied at Rosary Senior Secondary School and began training at cricket academies in the city. Yet, it was a setback that would ultimately redirect the family's path.

When he failed to secure a place in a Delhi age-group cricket team, his father made a life-changing decision. Convinced that his sons would have better opportunities in Kerala, he took voluntary retirement and moved the family back to their home state.

Sanju's mother, Lijy Samson, remembers those early days as a period filled with discipline and sacrifice. She says her son's routine revolved entirely around cricket. "Even as a teenager, he was very focused," she says. "He would wake up early for practice and come home tired after long training sessions. But he never complained because cricket was what he loved the most."

Samson made his IPL debut in 2013 for Rajasthan Royals (he will now play for Chennai Super Kings). **His 172 innings have yielded 4,704 runs at an average of 30.9**

He made his T20I debut for India in 2015. He has played 54 innings, scoring 1,399 runs at an average of 28.6

Data: Rajesh Kumar

Back in Thiruvananthapuram, Sanju resumed his training with renewed determination. Much of his practice took place at the Medical College ground, one of the few venues in the city where aspiring cricketers could access proper nets and coaching. But structured training sessions were only part of the routine. The local ground near his house in Vizhinjam became another important training space, where he spent hours batting against friends and local bowlers. These informal sessions often continued until sunset.

Among those who closely followed his progress was Renil Arul Das, the secretary and co-founder of Lords Sports Club at Thennoorkonam near Vizhinjam. Renil recalls that even as a teenager, Sanju showed remarkable dedication. "He had extraordinary timing with the bat," Renil says. "But more than that, he had a hunger to keep practising. He would bat for hours and ask bowlers to continue even after others had finished their sessions." Renil recalls that members of the local club often encouraged the youngster by organising matches and giving him opportunities to play against stronger opponents. "Everyone in the area believed he had something special."

The narrow roads and small tea shops of Vizhinjam also witnessed Sanju's journey from a neighbourhood cricketer to a rising star. Locals remember seeing him ride past with his kit bag on the way to practice sessions. Autorickshaw driver Santhosh Kumar says the community still feels proud about the success of the boy who once practised in their neighbourhood grounds. "Even today, he is the same humble person," Santhosh says. "Whenever he comes home, he greets everyone and speaks kindly. Fame has not changed him."

> "It feels like someone from our own family is playing. Sanju speaks to everyone with the same simplicity he had as a young boy
>
> — MANOHARAN S
> AUTO DRIVER

Another local driver, Manoj K, says Sanju's achievements are celebrated collectively in the locality. "Whenever he scores big, many of us gather to watch the match," he says. "It feels like someone from our own family is playing." Manoharan S, another autorickshaw driver, says Sanju is grounded despite his growing popularity: "He speaks to everyone with the same simplicity he had as a young boy."

One of the coaches who helped shape Sanju's early career in Thiruvananthapuram was Biju George. George remembers the teenager as a player who combined natural flair with an eagerness to learn while training at the Medical College ground. "Sanju had tremendous talent," he says. "But what impressed me more was his willingness to listen and improve." According to George, Sanju's dedication, hard work, and punctuality in training distinguished him from many other young players. "He had both the talent and patience to work hard every day. He sacrificed a lot, and thoroughly deserves this stature," George adds.

For the fishermen living along the Vizhinjam coast, Sanju's rise represents a source of pride that extends beyond cricket. Local fisherman Varghese T remembers watching the youngster practise, years before he became famous. "He was always respectful to elders," Varghese says. "Even now, he smiles and talks to everyone. That is why people here feel so close to him."

Even today, as Sanju plays before packed stadiums and television audiences across the world, the lessons of Vizhinjam remain close. In many ways, cricket resembles the sea he grew up around — unpredictable, unforgiving and impossible to control. And like the fishermen he once observed from the shore, he has learned that the only thing one can do is prepare, go out, and try again.

That temperament also sets him apart from another cricketer Kerala produced earlier — S Sreesanth.

Both emerged from the same state but projected strikingly different attitudes. Sreesanth was known for his emotional and expressive personality. His celebrations, sledging and animated appeals made him one of the most colourful characters in Indian cricket — a 'temperamental showman'.

Sanju's personality is markedly restrained. He is calm, composed and understated, rarely showing anger or emotion during matches. His leadership style is often compared to the quiet composure associated with M S Dhoni.

If Sreesanth's career often reflected cricket's volatile drama, Sanju's journey has largely been defined by patience and gradual growth — a temperament shaped long ago on the shores of Vizhinjam, where fishermen know that success is never guaranteed, but the sea must still be faced again the next morning.

ANDHRA PRADESH CAPITAL REGION DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (APCRDA)
Project Office, AMARAVATI, Rayapudi Post, Guntur District – 522237.

E PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE

NIT No. 128/MAU61-ADMN0STG(OTH)/12/2025-STG Dt. 10.03.2026
Name of Work: APCRDA - "RFP for Selection of Consulting Firm for Development of Governance and Institutional Framework for Amaravati Capital City" The bid can be downloaded on AP e-procurement portal from 12.03.2026 to 02.04.2026 up to 14.00 Hrs. Due date for submission of Bid is 02.04.2026 up to 15.00 Hrs, Technical bid opening 02.04.2026 @16.00Hrs. For further details Please refer to **www.apeprocurement.gov.in** and **www.crda.ap.gov.in.**

Sd/- Commissioner, **APCRDA,** Amaravati

TOURISM CORPORATION OF GUJARAT LIMITED (TCGL)
(A Government of Gujarat undertaking)
Nigam Bhavan, Sector 16, Block C, First Floor,
Nr. GH 4½ Bus Stand, Gandhinagar – 382 016.
Website: **https://www.gujarattourism.com**

TENDER NOTICE

Bids are invited from reputed and experienced consultants for **"Preparation of Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan, Prioritization Matrix, and Project Shelf for the Surat Economic Region, Gujarat".**

The project requirements, technical specifications, eligibility criteria, selection process, etc. are included in the Tender documents, which shall be available for download from the websites: **https://tender.nprocure.com/** and **https://www.gujarattourism.com** from **13/03/2026** onwards.

The last date for submission of the **Technical and Financial Bid (online only) is 13/04/2026 up to 6:00 pm. and Technical Bid (physical only) is 16/04/2026 up to 4:00 pm.**

Managing Director

PSPCL Punjab State Power Corporation Limited
(Regd. Office : PSEB Head Office, The Mall, Patiala-147001)
Corporate Identification Number (CIN): U40109PB2010SGC033813
Website : www.pspcl.in (Contact Number 9646118754)

Tender Enquiry No. 350/HPs/ED-I/S-433 Dated : 10.03.2026

Dy. CE/ Hydel Projects, PSPCL, Shed A-3, Shakti Vihar, PSPCL, Patiala Invites E-Tender for **Manufacturing, testing, supply, supervision of ET&C at site of 02 no. 630 KVA, 11 KV/433 V dry type cast resin station transformers for Shanan PH, PSPCL, Joginder Nagar, District Mandi (HP).** For detailed NIT & tender specification please refer to https://eproc.punjab.gov.in from 13.03.2026 (11:00 AM) onwards.

NOTE : Corrigendum and Addendum, if any will be published online at https://eproc.punjab.gov.in

C 385/26, DPR/Pb.:1079/12/2025-26/9324

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU
FOREST DEPARTMENT
Tamil Nadu Coastal Restoration Mission, Chennai – 600 035.

Request for Proposal (RFP) No: IN-TNSHORE-532766-CS-QCBS-2
E-Procurement Notice (Re-publish)

Title: Consultancy Services for Supervision of Constructions of Sea Turtle Conservation Centre, International Dugong Conservation Centre, Mangrove Conservation Centre & International Bird Conservation Centre

The above-mentioned assignment has been republished (re-tendered). The eligible consultants shall visit **www.tntenders.gov.in** for more details from **12.03.2026.**

Chief Mission Director,
Tamil Nadu Coastal Restoration Mission,
No. 327, 9th Floor, Metros - CMRL Building, Anna Salai,
Nandanam, Chennai – 600 035.

DIPR/ 302 /DISPLAY/2026

INVEST UP
2nd, 4th & 6th Floor, A-Block, PICUP Bhawan, Vibhuti Khand
Gomti Nagar, Lucknow-226 010 (U.P.), 91-522-3129570 & 3117976
E-mail: info@investup.org.in | W: https://invest.up.gov.in/

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTICE

Invest UP invites a Technical Proposal from interested Applicants (the "Proposals") for **"EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)** for **Empanelment of Global Capability Centres (GCC) Industry Partners with Invest UP"** for Invest UP, PICUP Bhawan, Lucknow.

Last Date of Bid submission is **25.03.2026** at **1600 hrs.** (IST). Further details regarding submission of e-bids are available in the RFP document on the e-tender portal at **https://etender.up.nic.in** and Invest UP's website **https://invest.up.gov.in**

Invest UP reserves the right to cancel any or all the e-Bids or annul the bidding process without assigning any reason thereof.

Bid Reference : IUP/4239/GCC/GM_IP/2025-26 **ISSUER,**
Dated : 11.03.2026 **CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, INVEST UP**

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY
E-Tendering Notice No.: 2026-Mar-01 **Dated: 10.03.2026**

E-TENDERING NOTICE

Divisional Railway Manager (Engineering), N.C. Rly Agra for and on behalf of the President of India invites "Open Tender" through on Line only (E-Tendering) for the following works. The details of the tender are as under:

Tender No.: 2026-Mar-01-01	**Approx Cost Rs.:** 24865844.95

Description of work: Raising of 02 nos. platform to high level for recoupment of shortfall in MEA at DMSR and JTKN stations in BHA-ETW section.

For full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railways website **"www.ireps.gov.in".** Tenders can only be submitted through web portal **"www.ireps.gov.in"** up to **15:00 hrs** on **02.04.2026** **546/26 (ADM)**

North central railways www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in @ CPRONCR

PSPCL Punjab State Power Corporation Limited
Regd. Office : PSEB Head Office, The Mall, Patiala-147001
Corporate Identity Number : U40109PB2010SGC033813,
Website : www.pspcl.in GSTIN : 03AAFCP5120Q1ZC
Contact No. 0175-2213038

Tender Enquiry No. (RfS No.) 61/PSPCL/1000MWh/ELEC/ED-1861/(BESS-3) Dt : 10.03.2026

Office of SE/Electrical, Thermal (D), T-4, Shakti Vihar, PSPCL, Patiala-147001, invites bids for setting up 500 MW/1000 MWh Standalone Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) in Punjab under Tariff-Based Global Competitive Bidding on INR/kWh basis without VGF (followed by e-reverse auction) on INR/kWh basis without VGF. For detailed NIT and tender specifications please refer to **https://www.bharat-electronictender.com**.

Note : Corrigendum and addendum, if any, will be published online at **https://www.bharat-electronictender.com** only.

C 368/26,DPR/Pb.:1079/12/2025-26/9329

Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited
(Wholly Owned Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
(CIN: U04010KA2002SGC030438)
No: BESCOM/GM(A&HR)/BC-50/2524/2024-25 Date: 11.03.2026

NOTIFICATION

In pursuance to KPTCL Employment Notification dated 14.10.2024, the Cut-Off Marks along with the Provisional Selection Lists of Endurance Test qualified candidates selected on merit on the basis of marks secured in the SSLC/10th Standard for the post of Junior Powerman (NKK/KK) in BESCOM is published in website: **https://bescom.karnataka.gov.in.**

Sd/- General Manager (Admin& HR)
Corporate Office, BESCOM, Belaku Bhavan, Bengaluru.

For Electricity related complaints call: 1912
Download BESCOM Mithra Mobile APP

HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT ALLAHABAD

NOTIFICATION OF VACANCIES
PRIVATE SECRETARY GRADE-I RECRUITMENT EXAMINATION-2026
Abridged Advertisement

ADV. No. 01/Private Secretary Grade-I/ 2026 **Date: 12th March 2026**

On-line Applications with separate fee are invited from eligible candidate to fill up the post of Private Secretary Grade-I in the Establishment of High Court, Allahabad under The Allahabad High Court Private Secretaries (Condition of Service) Rules, 2001 (as amended from time to time) and orders as issued by Hon'ble The Chief Justice from time to time in this regard:

Post Name	No. of vacancies	Pay Scale (as per 7th pay commission)	Age	Minimum Essential Qualifications
Private Secretary Grade-I	195	Level 10 (56100-177500)	21 years to 35 years as on 01.07.2026	1. Bachelor's degree from a University established by law in India or a qualification recognized as equivalent thereto 2. Good knowledge of English shorthand and typewriting with minimum speed of 100 and 40 words per minute, respectively 3. Knowledge of Data Entry, Word Processing & Computer Operation

The number of vacancies in each category may increase or decrease. Vertical reservation for S.C., S.T. and O.B.C. of U.P. and Horizontal reservation as per rules shall be applicable. Maximum age limit shall in the case of candidates of the S.C., S.T. & other categories candidates of U.P. be enhanced as per applicable rules.

The link for submission of On-line Application Form will remain active from **12th March, 2026 to 01st April, 2026** and for fee payment upto **2nd April 2026.**

Fee for General (Unreserved) and OBC category candidates for each post shall be Rs.1900/- (bank charges extra) and the fee for SC/ST/E.W.S. category of Uttar Pradesh for each post shall be Rs. 1700/- (bank charges extra). The candidates belonging to the Horizontal category shall have to pay fees according to their original category.

For mode of examination and other relevant details kindly refer to the detailed advertisement. The information regarding Date, Time and Venue of the Examination/Tests shall be intimated to the candidates through online admit cards only.

Candidates may get the details of On-line Application, Detailed Advertisement, General Instructions and apply On-line on the official Web-site of this Hon'ble Court i.e. **www.allahabadhighcourt.in** and **https://exams.nta.nic.in/allhcre**

Sd/-
Registrar General

DELHI GMR
Delhi International Airport Limited
Registered Office: New Udaan Bhawan, Opp. Terminal 3, Indira Gandhi International Airport, New Delhi – 110 037
CIN NO. U63033DL2006PLC146936

NOTICE INVITING TENDER (NIT)

Delhi International Airport Ltd. (DIAL) invites tender for **"OPERATION & MAINTENANCE OF TERMINAL-3 ELECTRICAL SYSTEM AND OPERATION & MAINTENANCE OF MEP SYSTEM OF ASB, ACB, IGI AIRPORT, NEW DELHI".**

For details, the interested parties may download the Tender document free of charge from **www.newdelhiairport.in** between 12.03.26 to 20.03.26 and submit their bid on 30.03.26 as prescribed in Tender document.

DIAL/233/PREM ASSOCIATES

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
Tender Notice No. SWR-RSP-01PSSA-07
Dated : 06-03-2026

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tenders for the following works.

Name of the Work	Approx. Value
Appointment of Project Supervision Services Agency (PSSA) for providing Project Supervision Services at various sites / sections in the jurisdiction of CAO(C)/RSP Unit. (Service Contract)	Rs. 1,63,90,632/-

Last date for submission of bids:
Upto 15:00 Hrs on 10-04-2026

For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in

Deputy Chief Engineer / Road Over Bridges / Hubballi

PUB/981/AAS/PRB/SWR/2025-26

Download the **RailOne** app. RailOne is the all-in-one railway app by Indian Railways. Passengers can book reserved tickets, unreserved tickets, platform ticktes, and season passes, check PNR status, order food, and access many more services at their fingertips. Use digital payment to book unreserved tickets through **RailOne** app, and enjoy up to a **3%** discount.

Government of Karnataka
Panchayat Raj Engineering Division, Bagalkot
Tel Phone.: 08354-235842 E-mail ID: bgkeerpe@yahoo.com
Fax: 08354-235843

No: EE/PRED/BGK/TB 2,3/Tender/2025 26/8245 Date: 10 03 2026

TIME EXTENSION SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Two Cover System) KW-1, 2, 3 & 4 Bid Document

Reference No: 01.EE PRED Bagalkot Tender No: EE/PRED/BGK/TB-123/Tender/2025-26/8025 Date: 25.02.2026
Tender Called for vide above reference of Work Indent

No: ಮಾನ್ಯ ಮುಖ್ಯಮಂತ್ರಿಯವರ ಹಾಗೂಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಆಡಳಿತ ಇಲಾಖೆಯ (ಎಸ್.ಡಿ.ಪಿ.ಐ) ಸಚಿವರು ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕರಿಗೆ ಯೋಜನೆ ಅಡಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಬೇಕಾ ಮಾಹಿತಿಯ ಸ್ಪಷ್ಟತೆಗೆ ಅವಶ್ಯಕತೆಯಾದ ರೂ. 50.00/- ವೆಚ್ಚದ ಮೊತ್ತದ ಯೋಜನೆ ಅತಿ ಶೀಘ್ರ ಪೂರ್ಣಗೊಳಿಸಿ ಸಕ್ಷಮ ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಅವಶ್ಯಕವಿರುವ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಳನ್ನು ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೋರಿದೆ.

ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಸಚಿವರ ಆದೇಶ ಸಂ: 24827, 24119, 22912, 22520/CALL-2

ಪ್ರಧಾನ ಮಂತ್ರಿ ಗ್ರಾಮೀಣ ಆವಾಸ್ ಯೋಜನೆ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: 2252/CALL-2

ಸಂಬಂಧಿತ ಮಾಹಿತಿ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಆದೇಶ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: 25000

ಪ್ರಧಾನ ಮಂತ್ರಿ ಗ್ರಾಮೀಣ ಆವಾಸ್ ಯೋಜನೆ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: 22166/CALL-2

ಈ ಮೇಲಿನ ಕೆಲಸಕ್ಕೆ ಅರ್ಹತಾವಧಿಗಳನ್ನು ಈ ಕೆಳಗಿನಂತೆ ಆಯ್ಕೆ ಮಾಡಿದೆ.

ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳ ವಿವರ, ಅಂದಾಜು ಮತ್ತು ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರ ಅರ್ಹತೆ ವಿವರ, ಭದ್ರತಾ ಮೊತ್ತ :ರೂ.20.00/- ರಿಂದ ರೂ. 120.00/- ಲಕ್ಷಗಳ ವರೆಗೆನವುಗಳು. read as below

Calendar of Events

01	Last Date of Request of blank Tender Documents and receipt of Completed Technical & Financial Bid through e-procurement	**Date: 18.03.2026 at 17.30 hrs instead of 11.03.2026 at 17.30 hrs**
02	Pre Bid meeting Date.	**Date: 13.03.2026 at 11.00 hrs instead of 06.03.2026 at 11.00 hrs**
03	Opening of Technical Bid	**Date: 20.03.2026 at 11.30 hrs instead of 13.03.2026 at 11.00 hrs**
04	Opening of Financial Bid Date	**Technical Bid Approval**

Note:- No Changes in any other Conditions, more details can be obtained through website https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/ or contact the below signed Office during the office hours. Phone no: 08354-235842

Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
P.R.E. Division, Bagalkote

DIPR/BAGALKOT/6410/2025-26/DESHPANDEPUBLICITY

e-File No.:A-12034/8/2026-R-I Section/part file
National Council of Educational Research and Training
Sri Aurbindo Marg, New Delhi-110016
(Recruitment-1 Section)

Notification

1. An Advertisement No. 178/2026 is being issued for filling up 02 posts of Principal (Group 'A') by the National Council of Educational Research and Training for its Regional Institute of Education Located at Bhubaneswar and Shillong. For eligibility conditions and other details please visit NCERT website: **www.ncert.nic.in** (see the link Announcement-Vacancy-Academic).

2. The last date of receipt of completed application in response to Advt. No.178/2026 is **21 days** from the date of publication of this Notification in the Employment News.

Under Secretary
R-I Section

Soban Singh Jeena Government Institute of Medical Science & Research Almora
Near Vikas Bhawan, Pandeykhola, Almora,
Distt-Almora-263601 (Uttarakhand)
E-mail - principal.gmcalmora@gmail.com http://www.ssjgimsralmora.org
मोबाइल सं.:- 9412410759 फोन नम्बर:-05962-230557

Letter No. 977/GMCA/G-1/Advertisement/2025-26 Date:-11 March, 2026

Walk-In-Interview

A Walk In interview for various post of **"Professor, Associate Professor & Assistant Professor"** at Soban Singh Jeena Government Institute of Medical Science & Research Almora will be held on **02.04.2026 at 10:00am** on wards in **"Office of the Principal, Soban Singh Jeena Government Institute of Medical Science & Research Almora".** Registration will be done on the day of interview till 1:00 PM only. The post will be filled on yearly renewal contract basis for a maximum period of 03 (three) years or till regular appointment are made. For further details please visit our website:-**http://www.ssjgimsralmora.org, www.medicaleducation.uk.gov.in & www.hnbumu.ac.in**

Principal
SSJ Govt. IMSR Almora
Almora.

TIMES GLOBAL

* THE TIMES OF INDIA, BENGALURU | THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2026

I GREW UP PROUD OF BEING COLOMBIAN, SAYS RACHEL ZEGLER WHO FACED AGGRESSIVE PUSHBACK FOR PLAYING 'SNOW WHITE'

A MAN WHO DARES TO WASTE ONE HOUR OF TIME HAS NOT DISCOVERED THE VALUE OF LIFE.
— CHARLES DARWIN

ACTOR DANIEL RADCLIFFE SAYS 'CHILD STARS LIVING A PERFECT DREAM' IS AN ILLUSION, WANTS THERAPY BUILT INTO THE SYSTEM

IEA to release record 400 million barrels of oil from reserves to ease war impact

Trump Again: US War On Iran Will End 'Soon'

The International Energy Agency (IEA) said on Wednesday its member countries would unlock 400 million barrels of oil from their reserves to ease the impact of the Middle East war, the biggest such release ever.

The coordinated release was the sixth in the history of the organisation, which was created to coordinate responses to major supply disruptions after the 1973 oil crisis. "This is a major action aiming to alleviate the immediate impacts of the disruption in markets," IEA executive director Fatih Birol told reporters.

US President Donald Trump Wednesday again signalled there could be a swift ending to the war on Iran, saying there is little left in the country for American forces to attack. There is "practically nothing left to target" and the war will end "soon," Trump was quoted as saying in an interview with news outlet Axios. "Any time I want it to end, it will end."

Trump has given repeated mixed messages about the timing and aims of the war that began on Feb28 but has increasingly hinted at ending it as soon as global oil prices spike.

The IEA-coordinated release exceeded the 182 million barrels of oil that member countries of the Paris-based global energy body released in 2022 when Russian leader Vladimir Putin invaded Ukraine.

NYT

A woman holds a poster of Mojtaba Khamenei, Iran's new supreme leader, during a funeral ceremony for high-ranking military officials killed by US-Israeli airstrikes in Tehran, on Wednesday

Lensmen barred from war briefings

New York: The Pentagon has not permitted photographers to cover defence secretary Pete Hegseth's last two briefings on the war in Iran, and hasn't explained the change in longstanding policy. A Pentagon spokesman, Joel Valdez, declined to comment for this story. PTI

The 32-member IEA said that the emergency stocks will be made available "over a timeframe that is appropriate to the national circumstances of each member country."

The IEA announcement came as leaders of the Group of Seven advanced economies discussed the economic fallout from the US-Israeli war with Iran, now into its second week, at a video conference meeting chaired by French President Emmanuel Macron.

Macron, whose country holds the rotating presidency of the G7 advanced economies, urged US President Donald Trump and other G7 leaders to coordinate to open the strait "as soon as possible."

Israel boosts def budget by $13 billion to fund Iran war

PM Netanyahu's cabinet approved a revised state budget for 2026. The new plan, approved Wednesday, adds $10.4 billion, about 1.5% of Israel's GDP, for defence. "This war is costing lots of money," he said in a video statement late Tuesday. BLOOMBERG

Companies evacuate Dubai financial district after threats from Iran

US group Citi, consultancies Deloitte and PwC and other firms in Dubai have closed offices or asked employees to evacuate Wednesday after Iran threatened US and Israel-linked economic assets in Middle East.

The evacuations at the heart of the Middle East's financial hub come as the Gulf but especially the UAE has borne the brunt of Iran's attacks in response to US-Israeli strikes.

Iran's military threatened Wednesday to attack US and Israeli economic targets in the region, including banks, after overnight attacks reportedly hit an Iranian bank.

Employees were asked to evacuate Citi offices in the Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC) and in Oud Metha, a source with knowledge of the evacuations said.

British consulting group PwC will close offices in Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the UAE and Kuwait for the remainder of the week as a "precaution", a second source said.

Deloitte, another British consultancy, told its staff to vacate their DIFC offices on Wednesday afternoon, a third source said. Employees at two other companies in DIFC said their offices had been evacuated as a precaution.

Iran's central operational command, Khatam Al-Anbiya, said "the enemy has given us free rein to target economic centres and banks belonging to the United States and the Zionist regime". AFP

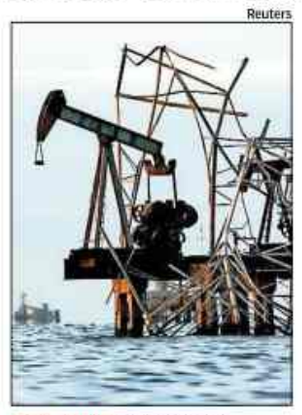
Dubai airport, commercial ships targeted

Iran attacked commercial ships on Wednesday across the Persian Gulf and targeted Dubai International Airport, escalating its campaign of squeezing the oil-rich region. Drones fell near Dubai airport, injuring four people, while attacks hit three ships in or near the Strait of Hormuz.

"Two drones fell in the vicinity of Dubai International Airport a short while ago, resulting in minor injuries to two Ghanaian nationals and one Bangladeshi national, and moderate injuries to one Indian national," the Dubai Media Office said. "Air traffic is operating as normal." AP

Trump's billionaire diplomacy seeks out best of refining tech

Chidanand Rajghatta | TNN



Reuters

FOR SHALE: Abandoned pumpjacks damaged over time at a field of state oil company PDVSA in Cabimas, Venezuela. Reliance's Jamnagar Refinery is built to process the "bottom of the barrel" oil — heavy, sour, and cheap crudes from places like Venezuela and Iran

ANALYSIS

In the world of global energy, there are projects that are ambitious, and then there are projects that are "Trumpian". When MAGA supremo Donald Trump announced on Tuesday that the United States would build its first new oil refinery in half a century — with backing from India's Reliance Industries — he framed it in characteristic superlatives. "America is returning to real energy dominance," Trump declared, hailing what he called a "historic $300 billion deal", the largest energy investment in US history.

Strip away the hyperbole and the announcement still represents something unusual: a major new American refinery—planned for the Port of Brownsville, Texas—with a leading investor from India, a country simultaneously navigating oil ties with Russia, Iran and the US.

The project reflects a rare convergence of geopolitical derring-do, energy economics, and billionaire diplomacy linking Trump with India's richest family, the Ambanis.

The proposed refinery — under the banner "America First Refining"— is designed to process American shale crude and export refined fuels such as gasoline, diesel and jet fuel. If completed, it would help address a structural mismatch in the US energy system: the country produces vast quantities of light shale oil but many existing refineries were built decades ago to process heavier imported crude.

More striking than the proposed refinery itself is the identity of the partner. Reliance, controlled by Mukesh Ambani, is not merely another foreign investor. It operates the world's largest refining complex at Jamnagar in Gujarat and has quietly become one of the most technically sophisticated refiners in the global oil business.

To understand why Reliance is the chosen partner for a Texas revival, one must look at the barren Jamnagar landscape in the late 1990s. There, against the advice of every global consultant who cited a lack of water, power, and roads, Reliance Industries, then under the tutelage of Dhirubhai Ambani, built RPL, the world's largest grassroots oil refinery, a gigantic 1.24 million-barrel-per-day ecosystem that fundamentally changed the global oil trade.

The Jamnagar Refinery's uniqueness lies in its Nelson Complexity Index (NCI) of 21.1 — the highest in the world; NCI is a measure of an oil refinery's capability to produce high-value products. While most refineries are "simple" plants that require high-quality "sweet" crude, Jamnagar was built to process the "bottom of the barrel" oil—heavy, sour, and cheap crudes from places like Venezuela and Iran, both in the news in recent weeks — and transform them into ultra-premium fuels that met strict EU and US environmental standards.

This technical audacity turned India from a fuel-deficit nation into a global export hub, even though the country lacks its own oil spigot. It also gave Mukesh Ambani, the "Master Builder" who is said to have lived in a trailer during the project's construction, a reputation for doing the impossible on a record-breaking timeline. The refinery effectively shifted India from being a net importer of refined fuels to a major exporter. It also turned Reliance from a petrochemicals firm into a global refining powerhouse.

So in Brownsville, the US is not just getting capital; it is effectively buying the "Reliance Blueprint"" to solve its own structural mismatch; in return, Reliance— and India — get a "Jamnagar West." A small additional detail: there is a US mid-term election coming up in Nov and sub-par performance in Texas will be a disaster for MAGA.

Typically, it is Washington's famed lobbyists who grease the wheels of such deals. But from all accounts, the "Donesh Trumpani" alliance was fuelled by what can best be described as dynastic diplomacy. It all began with Ivanka Trump's 2017 visit to Hyderabad for the Global Entrepreneurship Summit where Mukesh first met her. By March 2024, she and Jared Kushner — and their daughter Arabella — were personal guests at the Ambani pre-wedding celebrations. Donald Trump Jr.'s 2025 visit to Vantara, the Ambanis' animal conservation project in Gujarat, further signalled a bonding between the heirs.

Spurring the deal in recent days was the newly-arrived US ambassador, Trump confidant Sergio Gor. Seated next to Mukesh during the India-US T20 World Cup cricket game, they were said to be discussing more than fours and sixes.

Iran threatens to target regional ports if its own attacked

Iran's armed forces threatened on Wednesday to target regional ports if its own ports were attacked during the war with Israel and the United States, a spokesman said. "If our ports and docks are threatened, all ports and docks in the region will be our legitimate targets," armed forces spokesman Abolfazl Shekarchi said, according to state TV. He warned that the armed forces "will carry out a heavier operation than what we have done so far" if Iranian ports were to come under attack. "We call on the countries of the region to expel the Americans from their lands." AP

India expresses deep alarm at escalation of hostilities in Lebanon

United Nations: India on Wednesday joined nearly 30 troop-contributing countries to the UNIFIL to express deep alarm at the escalation of hostilities in Lebanon and strongly condemn Hezbollah's "reckless decision" to join the war. India is among the 50 countries that contribute troops to the United Nations Interim Force In Lebanon (UNIFIL). Our peacekeepers with a long standing commitment to the UNIFIL continue to execute their mandate and provide help to locals, India said. PTI

WAR HITS ALUMINIUM, HELIUM PRODUCTION

The disruption to global commodity prices from the US-Israeli war with Iran is spreading far beyond energy markets. **From basic plastics and fertilizer made in Saudi Arabia and Oman to sugar from Brazil and helium from Qatar, the conflict has affected the price, supply or production of a variety of commodities that are essential to the global economy. How severe the disruption becomes will depend largely on how long the conflict drags on**

Here are six major commodities, besides oil and gas, that are being affected by the war

Qatar Energy's LNG operating facilities

Aluminium

Aluminium prices jumped to their highest level in almost four years Monday after a halt to deliveries from major aluminium smelters in Qatar and Bahrain, forcing buyers to hunt for replacement metal from Asia. **Producers in the Persian Gulf accounted for about 8% of the world's supply of aluminium last year, according to the International Aluminum Institute.** Processing for the metal requires huge amounts of energy, but raw materials for aluminium have to be imported, by ships

Ethanol and Sugar

In Brazil, the world's largest producer of sugarcane, the crop can be used for sugar or to produce ethanol, a fuel used in cars across the country. **When ethanol prices rise, mills tend to focus on more profitable fuel, and that may be about to happen again.** With oil prices soaring, ethanol jumped about 10% Monday, and gains like that may lead Brazilian processors to use more cane for fuel when harvest begins in weeks

Sulfur and Urea

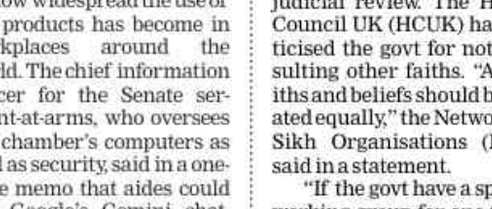
- Sulfur, which is produced during oil and gas refining, is also essential for fertilizer production and used in many other industries. The yellow powder makes it easier to cut, drill and shape certain metals, such as copper, without ruining the tools or machinery. **Nearly half the world's sulfur is now trapped on the Persian Gulf side of the Strait of Hormuz, according to CRU Group**
- Roughly one-third of the world's traded urea, the dominant form of nitrogen fertilizer, normally passes through the Strait of Hormuz. **It's produced in the Middle East because natural gas is an essential feedstock for fertilizer. Urea prices have risen as much as 35% since the war began**

Helium

Helium is a vital gas for semiconductor manufacturing. It helps cool delicate equipment, powers MRI machines and supports research labs and defense technologies — and, of course, it's used in party balloons. **Qatar produces roughly a third of the world's helium, making it the second-largest supplier after the United States.** But production there has been disrupted since Iran struck the Ras Laffan Industrial City — the natural gas hub where the country's helium facilities are. **More than a quarter of the world's helium supply could be cut off if the Strait of Hormuz remains closed,** Phil Kornbluth, president of Kornbluth Helium Consulting, told CNBC

RESOLUTE DUBAI KEEPS SHELVES STOCKED

An analysis of 2025 trade transactions by Altana, a New York-based global supply chain management company, found that **Saudi Arabia, Iraq, the UAE, Kuwait, Qatar, and Bahrain together imported an estimated $10 billion in cereals, meat, and fresh produce. Nearly all of it arrives by sea, transiting through the Strait of Hormuz.** The United Arab Emirates imports around 80–90% of its food requirements due to limited arable land and water scarcity. **For now, the UAE govt is keeping the shelves packed and has sought to reassure residents there are enough reserves to last for several months** and is monitoring prices



A Dubai supermarket is all stocked up

- **Cargo delays and rerouting:** Ships carrying Indian rice, Australian meat and Indonesian coffee are delayed or forced to take alternative routes
- **Air freight replacing sea routes:** Retailers such as Lulu Group are chartering cargo flights to bring in meat, fruits and vegetables

Sugar stock to last two years: UAE's giant Al Khaleej sugar refinery has enough reserves for two years and can meet demand from the UAE and the rest of the Gulf for that period

- **Food exports halted:** Iran, the top supplier of fresh fruit and vegetables to the UAE, has banned exports of all food and agricultural products until further notice, the semi-official Tasnim news agency reported last week
- **Rice shipments stuck:** Around 400,000 tonnes of Indian basmati rice are stranded at ports or at sea due to vessel shortages
- **Logistics costs rising:** Rerouting cargo by air or land is increasing supply-chain costs, which could push up food prices

Text: NYT, Bloomberg

Kyiv: Ukrainian anti-drone teams in Qatar, UAE, Saudi

Ukrainian anti-drone experts have begun working in three Gulf states targeted by Iranian attacks, President Volodymyr Zelensky said Wednesday.

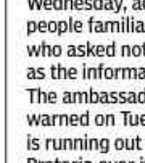
Kyiv has sought to leverage its expertise in downing Russian drones to help the Gulf nations, which are being attacked with the same Iranian-designed Shahed drones that Russia fires on Ukraine.

"Three of our teams have gone — strong teams of experts, military personnel, engineers, different people. Today the military are already communicating and already working," Zelensky said. His spokesman confirmed separately that the three countries were Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi .

Kyiv uses a mix of cheap drone interceptors, electronic jamming tools and anti-aircraft guns to down Russian drones. Ukraine has proposed swapping its interceptors for the expensive air defence missiles that the Gulf is currently using to down Iranian drones. AFP

Speculation rises over health of Iran's new leader

Speculation over the health of Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei grew Wednesday after the son of Iran's president mentioned hearing news about him "being injured".



Mojtaba, 56, is the son of the late supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. He has long been a secretive figure within Iran. His father and wife both were killed in an Israeli airstrike on Feb 28 that started the war. Mojtaba has not been seen since, nor has he given any statement since becoming supreme leader on Monday.

In an overnight post on the app Telegram, Yousef Pezeshkian, the son of President Masoud Pezeshkian, wrote: "I heard news about Mr Mojtaba being injured. I asked friends who were in contact. They said, thank God, he is healthy and there is no problem." AP

Lanka told to hand over Iranian sailors' bodies

A Sri Lankan court on Wednesday ordered that the bodies of 84 Iranian sailors killed in a US attack on an Iranian vessel off the island nation's coast be handed over to Iran's embassy. Currently, the bodies are stored in two freezer containers in Galle National Hospital.

Galle chief magistrate Sameera Dodangoda ordered the director of the hospital to handover the bodies to the Iranian embassy. The order was issued following a request by the Galle Harbour Police.

Last week on Wednesday, Sri Lanka said it had recovered 84 bodies of Iranian sailors after a US submarine attack sank the Iranian frigate IRIS Dena off Galle on the island's southern coast.

The ship was returning to Iran from Visakhapatnam, India, where it had participated in a naval fleet review exercise. The Lankan govt had earlier said the bodies would be kept in the country until the situation improved to enable their repatriation. PTI

Churchill and Austen to be replaced by wildlife on British banknotes

Naomi Canton

London: Winston Churchill, disliked in India for his role in the 1943 Bengal famine, and Jane Austen will no longer feature on British banknotes and instead be replaced by British wildlife.

Churchill features on £5 notes with his quote "I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat", and Austen appears on £10 notes saying: "I declare after all there is no enjoyment like reading!" JMW Turner appears on £20 and Alan Turing on £50 notes.

The Bank of England announced Wednesday that following a public consultation on which themes to use on its next series of banknote design, nature came out top. The monarch will continue to feature on the front.

"Within the nature theme, much of the feedback from respondents referred to wildlife that is native to the UK. The bank has also judged that wildlife images would be most effective for developing banknotes with security features," the bank said.

This means hedgehogs, badgers and puffins could replace historical figures, who were introduced in 1970. The bank will run a second consultation this summer to gather the public's views on which wildlife to feature.

Alex Burghart MP, shadow chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, said: "It is depressing that under Labour our heroes are considered too 'divisive' to be on the notes. Most countries celebrate their history. Ours should too."

"Already children don't have good enough knowledge of our own history and national heroes. This will make it worse," said former British diplomat Ameer Kotecha, who has roots in Gujarat.

Meta to acquire Moltbook; US OKs official use of chatbots

Meta Platforms, which owns Facebook and Instagram, said Tuesday it's acquiring Moltbook, a social network built exclusively for artificial intelligence agents to post and interact with each other. A takeover of the AI experiment comes weeks after Moltbook attracted viral attention as an unusual Reddit-like hub for AI systems trading gossip.

A top US Senate administrator on Monday gave aides the green light to use three artificial intelligence chatbots for official work, a reflection of how widespread the use of the products has become in workplaces around the world. The chief information officer for the Senate sergeant-at-arms, who oversees the chamber's computers as well as security, said in a one-page memo that aides could use Google's Gemini chat, OpenAI's ChatGPT or Microsoft Copilot. AP, NYT

Hindu, Sikh groups: UK's anti-Muslim hostility definition unfair on others

Naomi Canton

London: Hindu and Sikh groups have criticised a non-statutory (not legally binding) definition of anti-Muslim hostility and the appointment of an "Islamophobia tsar" by the UK govt, saying it will foster resentment and marginalise other faiths.

The Network of Sikh Organisations and the Free Speech Union are drawing up pre-action letters to send to UK communities secretary Steve Reed, ahead of challenging the definition via a judicial review. The Hindu Council UK (HCUK) has criticised the govt for not consulting other faiths. "All faiths and beliefs should be treated equally," the Network of Sikh Organisations (NSO) said in a statement.

"If the govt have a special working group for one faith, what about the others? If a special 'tsar' is appointed to protect the interests of one faith, why the exclusivity," the NSO asked. "Criminal law provides protection for all religious groups. Why do we even need a non-statutory definition," it asked.

The definition, introduced Monday, defines anti-Muslim hostility as criminal acts including verbal harassment directed at Muslims because of religion; treating Muslims as a collective group with fixed characteristics; and practices designed to disadvantage them. The ministry of housing, communities and local govt (MHCLG) said it was needed because hate crimes targeting Muslims were "at record levels".

The NSO expressed concerns the definition would curtail free speech on important matters such as grooming gangs. "Could the Sikh objection to halal slaughter of animals be interpreted as 'hostility'," it asked.

Moscow alleges Ukraine used UK's Storm Shadow missile to hit city

Moscow: The Kremlin on Wednesday accused British specialists of involvement in a deadly Ukrainian strike on the Russian city of Bryansk that used British Storm Shadow missiles and said it would take Britain's role "into account".

The Bryansk regional governor said Tuesday's strike killed at least six civilians and injured 37 in what he called a "terrorist missile attack", without saying what was hit. Ukraine said it had struck a key plant producing missile components. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Russia would take into account the British involvement.

Internet outages to last as long as 'necessary': Russia

Mobile internet outages in Russia will last as long as "necessary" to ensure citizens' safety, the Kremlin said Wednesday, after disruptions were recorded in Moscow and other Russian cities. REUTERS, AFP

DAILY PLANET

S Africa issues demarche to US ambassador

South Africa demarched the US ambassador to Pretoria over his recent criticism of the country, ratcheting up tensions between the two countries. The department of international relations and cooperation conveyed the diplomatic protest to Leo Brent Bozell on Wednesday, according to people familiar with the matter who asked not to be identified as the information isn't public. The ambassador-designate warned on Tuesday that Trump is running out of patience with Pretoria over its failure to address Washington's demands for changes to its domestic and foreign policies, Johannesburg-based news website Timeslive reported.

Arctic sea ice among lowest on record

Arctic sea ice is headed for one of its smallest winter peaks on record, an AFP review of US data showed Wednesday, as climate change shrinks the region's frozen cover and heightens geopolitical tensions. The maximum sea ice extent in the Arctic reached nearly 14.22 million square km on March 10, according to the data from the US National Snow and Ice Data Center. If the trend continues before winter ends, it would rank among the five smallest ice covers in four decades of satellite monitoring.

Starmer ignored warning over Epstein-linked hire

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer appointed Peter Mandelson as US ambassador despite an official vetting process that warned his ties to disgraced financier Jeffrey Epstein entailed "reputational risks." His national security adviser, Jonathan Powell, later described the hiring process as "weirdly rushed" — albeit after Mandelson had already been fired, according to online documents published by the UK govt on Wednesday.

6 die in Swiss bus blaze as man sets himself afire

Six people died and three were injured in a bus fire in a small Swiss town believed to have been caused by a man on board who set fire to himself, authorities said on Wednesday.

TIMES SPORT

THE TIMES OF INDIA, BENGALURU | THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2026

MIAMI'S BAM ADEBAYO SCORES 83 POINTS IN ONE GAME, SECOND HIGHEST IN NBA HISTORY

TO FIX BATTING FLAWS BEFORE PSL, BABAR AZAM OPTS OUT OF PAKISTAN'S NATIONAL T20 C'SHIP

TEAM FOR A DREAM

No side had ever defended the T20 World Cup title. Suryakumar Yadav's boys did it first. At home, no less. Here is **TOI's** report card of the 15 men who made it happen

Hindol.Basu@timesofindia.com

Pics: ANI & Getty Images

10/10

10/10

JASPRIT BUMRAH

There is a reason Suryakumar Yadav called him a "national treasure". India's cheat code! Named Player of the Match in the final for figures of 4/15. Finished joint top wicket-taker with 14 scalps and economy of 6.21 — remarkable on surfaces where everyone else bled runs. In the semifinal, he gave away just 14 runs across two overs in the death when England needed 69 off the last five overs.

M: **8** | W: **14** | ER: **6.21** | Ave: **12.42** | SR: **12.00**

SANJU SAMSON

When he got his chance, he dismantled the opposition bowling, narratives against him, and years of heartbreak. He kicked off his scoring spree with an unbeaten 97 against West Indies in a virtual quarterfinal, then 89 against England in the semifinal, and another 89 in the final — becoming only the second batter to score three consecutive 80-plus scores at a T20 World Cup. His 89 was the highest individual score in a men's T20 World Cup final. Was fittingly named Player of the Tournament.

M: **5** | R: **321** | SR: **199.37** | Ave: **80.25** | 50s: **3**

ISHAN KISHAN

The comeback stories at this World Cup had a recurring theme. People who had been written off, coming back with a bang. His

9/10

redemption arc was complete after smashing 54 off 25 in the final. His best performance came against Pakistan, leading the Indian charge with 77 off 40. He finished as the fourth-highest run-scorer in the tournament.

M: **9** | R: **317** | SR: **193.29** | Ave: **35.22** | 50s: **3**

ABHISHEK SHARMA

This was supposed to be his World Cup but lived on the edge of a cliff for seven matches, collecting three ducks in his first three innings.

6/10

Opposition off-spinners tied him in knots. There was noise about dropping him for the final. He silenced it most decisively, scoring the fastest half-century of the tournament off just 18 balls.

M: **8** | R: **141** | SR: **158.42** | Ave: **17.62** | 50s: **2**

RINKU SINGH

His tournament was truncated and difficult. Batting in cameo roles that didn't suit him, he lost his place in the XI by the business end.

5/10

But every Indian fielding highlight featured him; he contributed as a substitute fielder and remained a warm presence in what was clearly a painful month, having lost his father midway through the tournament.

M: **5** | R: **24** | SR: **82.75** | Ave: **8.00** | 50s: **0**

TILAK VARMA: 7.5/10

He started at No.3 but it didn't work. Dropped down to the middle-order and suddenly he looked a different batter. A 16-ball unbeaten 44

7.5/10

against Zimbabwe stood out, a 15-ball 27 against Windies, and a 7-ball 21 against England in the semis, where he smashed three sixes off Jofra Archer, underscored his importance.

Inns: 9 | Runs: 207 | SR: 154.47 | Ave: 29.57 | 50s: 0

HARDIK PANDYA

A reliable, clutch professional who showed up in the moments that mattered. Scored a half-century each against Namibia and Zimbabwe, but his best came in the semifinal against

8.5/10

England, where he scored a rapid 27 off 12 that powered India to a 250-plus total. With the ball, his best came against Pakistan (2/16). In the semifinal, he bowled the 19th over for just nine runs, claiming 2/38 to halt England.

M: **9** | R: **217** | SR: **160.74** | Ave: **27.12** | 50s: **2** Wkts: **9** | ER: **8.81** | BB: **2/16**

SHIVAM DUBE

Bailed India out of tough situations while batting down the order. His 31-ball 65 against the Netherlands helped India to 193 after struggling initially. In the final, he scored 24 runs in the final

8.5/10

over, taking India to 255. Even in the semis against England, he played a clutch knock, hitting 43 off 25 and taking down the wily Adil Rashid.

M: **9** | R: **235** | SR: **169.06** | Ave: **39.16** | 50s: **1** Wkts: **5** | ER: **14.12** | BB: **2/35**

AXAR PATEL

While he was not required with the bat, he came to the fore with the ball taking 11

8/10

wickets, often bowling clutch overs. In the final, he took 3/27. In the semis, two stunning catches from him changed the game entirely.

M: **7** | R: **16** | SR: **106.66** | Ave: **5.33** | 50s: **0** Wkts: **11** | ER: **8.20** | BB: **3/27**

GAUTAM GAMBHIR (COACH): 9/10

Two consecutive ICC trophies. The only man in history to win a T20 World Cup as player and coach. His biggest contribution was framing the team's ideology to "not playing for milestones". He backed Abhishek Sharma and Varun Chakravarthy through their lean phase.

9/10

7.5/10

SURYAKUMAR YADAV (CAPTAIN)

He led with clarity, instinct and energy. He read the game well and wasn't afraid to back his bowlers or shuffle the batting order under pressure. But with the bat, he looked a shadow of his peak self. Scored a solitary half-century—an unbeaten 84 off 49 against USA—that saved India the early blushes.

M: **9** | R: **242** | SR: **136.72** | Ave: **30.25** | 50s: **1**

WASHINGTON SUNDAR

He featured in just two games, registering 0/36 against the Netherlands and 0/17 against

5/10

South Africa with the ball. In the one innings he batted against the Proteas, he scored just 11 runs. He was the squad's depth, used as cover.

M: **2** | R: **11** | SR: **100.00** | Ave: **11.00** | 50s: **0** Wkts: **0** | ER: **8.83**

ARSHDEEP SINGH

On the high-scoring surfaces, he couldn't quite replicate his 2024 heroics but still managed

7.5/10

crucial performances in the semifinal against England and in the Super Eight game against Zimbabwe. The side trusted him throughout, and more often than not, he repaid that trust.

M: **8** | W: **9** | ER: **8.46** | Ave: **28.22** | SR: **20** | BB: **2/24**

VARUN CHAKRAVARTHY

It was a tournament of two halves. He took nine wickets in the group stage and bowled

7/10

economically, but across the next five matches, he leaked runs at 11.84, picking up just five more wickets. But 14 wickets at a World Cup is not bad.

M: **9** | W: **14** | ER: **9.25** | Ave: **20.50** | SR: **13.20** | BB: **3/7**

KULDEEP YADAV

7/10

Played just one match. Against Pakistan in Colombo, he delivered a tight three-over spell, taking 1/14. He watched the rest of the tournament from the dugout.

M: **1** | W: **1** | ER: **4.66** | Ave: **14** | SR: **18** | BB: **1/14**

MOHAMMED SIRAJ: 7/10

Called into the squad as a last-minute replacement for Harshit Rana, he played only

7/10

the opening match against the USA and walked away with figures of 3/29, stepping in for Bumrah who was ill.

M: **1** | W: **3** | ER: **7.25** | Ave: **9.66** | SR: **8** | BB: **3/29**

TIME TO ASK APOLLO +AI

BUSY KIDNEY

Your kidneys filter about 180 litres of blood every day to remove toxins.

Scan to check your kidney health

For any Health Query Chat with Ask Apollo +AI

Apollo 24|7

'Tendulkar brings honesty to table & keeps things simple'

▶ Continued from P1

Cast your mind back to India's 2011 World Cup, when Yuvraj Singh endured a horrendous time with the bat a year before the event. Questions swirled over whether he should even make the squad. During the camp, as the left-hander battled a dip in both form and fitness, Tendulkar told him, "You will matter when it matters most." Yuvraj went on to become Player of the Tournament.

In 2014, Virat Kohli said he was a psychological wreck after he could score just 134 runs in 10 innings on his maiden England tour as pacer James Anderson traumatised him outside off-stump. After his return, Kohli sent an SOS to Tendulkar and the two worked for a few days at the indoor nets at the Bandra Kurla Complex.

Kohli later said that their conversations weren't just about technical adjustments or batting. "It was about how he coped with such times... One thing he told me was, 'You should always do what works for you.' Before the game, if you do not feel like batting in the nets, don't bat in the nets. You should never do it just because other people are batting for half an hour in the nets," Kohli had mentioned during an interview with The Cricket Monthly.

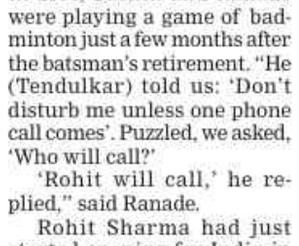
Kohli then went on to smash four hundreds in Australia in the 2014-2015 Border-Gavaskar Trophy.

Before the England tour in 2025, newly-crowned Test captain Shubman Gill too admitted that he had sought Tendulkar's advice on how to succeed in English conditions.

His advice to Gill about defending straight and scoring square enabled him to log 754 runs in the five-match series.

"The best thing about 'Master' is that he knows what conditions he is talking about. He makes people who approach him understand how to go about playing in certain conditions, respect them and do what works for them," says Atul Ranade, Tendulkar's childhood friend and currently Mumbai's Ranji team fielding coach.

Getty Images



LEARNING FROM THE MASTER: In 2014, Virat Kohli (R) sought Sachin Tendulkar's help

Modern-day cricketers have plenty of coaches they can approach. Why then do they still turn to Tendulkar for advice? "What he brings to the table is honesty," Ranade explained, "He'll also keep it as simple as possible, which makes it easy for the person to understand."

Out of favour batter Prithvi Shaw, who scored a Test hundred on debut in Oct 2018 against the West Indies, didn't just receive technical tips while training at the Mumbai Cricket Association ground, but was also told to mend his ways. "*Waapas track pe aaja* (Better get back on track)," Tendulkar reportedly told the captain of the India U-19 team that won the World Cup in New Zealand in early 2018.

"He's always there for them; he always has time to give back to the game. He's always ready to help in whatever way that he can," Ranade said.

Ranade remembered when in 2014, Sachin and Ranade were playing a game of badminton just a few months after the batsman's retirement. "He (Tendulkar) told us: 'Don't disturb me unless one phone call comes'. Puzzled, we asked, 'Who will call?'

'Rohit will call,' he replied," said Ranade.

Rohit Sharma had just started opening for India in ODIs, and as expected, his call came. Tendulkar stopped the game to speak with him for nearly half an hour.

Ranade said Tendulkar also played a major role in getting Sharma to the Mumbai Indians from the Deccan Chargers in 2011. Sharma went on to captain the team to five IPL championships.

Amidst West Asia crisis, IPL unveils first phase of schedule

New Delhi: Defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru will take on Sunrisers Hyderabad in the 2026 IPL opener in Bengaluru on March 28 as the BCCI announced the first phase of schedule amid concerns around players' travel arrangements due to the ongoing West Asia conflict

All matches scheduled at the Chinnaswamy Stadium remain subject to clearance from the Karnataka government appointed expert committee, which is scheduled to meet on March 13 to assess venue preparedness in the wake of the deadly stampede at the stadium last season. The BCCI announced the schedule of the first 20 games on Wednesday and will unveil the full schedule once the dates of elections in three states — Tamil Nadu, Assam and West Bengal — are announced.

Besides the state elections, the escalating conflict in West Asia will also be at the forefront of BCCI officials' minds. The war has wreaked international travel with operations of major airports like Doha and Dubai being heavily restricted.

As a result of that, some of the squad members of South Africa and West Indies are yet to reach home a week after the completion of their T20 World Cup campaign.

It remains to be seen if IPL bound players of those two nations report to their respective teams in time. "There was a substantial delay in departure of West Indies and South Africa players. It would be a tough task to get them back to India on time. Plus the airfares have gone up substantially due to the war in West Asia," a team official said.

The second game of the opening weekend will see Mumbai Indians host Kolkata Knight Riders at the Wankhede Stadium.

Additionally, hotels across India are facing cooking gas shortage due to the raging conflict and on Tuesday, the central government invoked Essential Commodities Act to ensure uninterrupted supply of domestic cooking gas. CSK CEO Kasi Viswanthan said that he is expecting his players from the West Indies and South Africa — Akeal Hosein and Dewald Brevis, to join the team well before their IPL opener. PTI

IPL CAPTAINS & COACHES MEET IN MUMBAI ON MARCH 25

Mumbai: The BCCI is slowly getting into 'IPL mode' after the euphoria surrounding India's 2026 T20 World Cup victory. The captains' photoshoot will take place in Delhi on March 15, while the annual IPL captains and coaches meeting will happen in Mumbai on March 25, TOI has learnt. —**Gaurav Gupta**

Lakshya's mental makeover with Brokman

Ashim.Sunam@timesofindia.com

Bengaluru: India No. 1 shuttler Lakshya Sen appears to be in a good space, both on and off the court. His runner-up finish at the All England Open Badminton reflects the steady upward curve over the past few months. Behind the scenes, mental conditioning coach Mon Nimrod

TOI EXCLUSIVE

Brokman has been working closely with Lakshya since last year to sharpen his psychological and cognitive preparation. Lakshya has credited Brokman — a former commander in the Special Forces unit of the Israeli Air Force — for helping him make those gains. In a conversation with TOI, Brokman spoke about Lakshya's mindset and what makes the Indian stand out. Excerpts:

A year working with Lakshya, how did you break the ice with him?
Lakshya was willing to try different methods such as hypoxia training, where oxygen levels are reduced while the athlete cycles. We also worked on cognitive training and did performance neurology to improve hand–eye coordination.

You had done emotional profiling and other tests on Lakshya?
After analysing the data, we realised that Lakshya is a high-arousal athlete. That means he performs with higher excitement and energy levels — he is more jumpy and pushy. Athletes such as MS Dhoni or Roger Federer are different. They are low-arousal athletes who perform better when their energy levels are calmer. Lakshya is more like Rafael Nadal or Virat Kohli. — athletes who thrive on adrenaline

Take us through the All England Championships? From the first round — against Shi Yuqi — I told him to treat every match like a final. He trusted his capabilities and that helped him in tight situations. He stuck to his own game and didn't fall into the trap of opponents trying to force their style on him.

Lakshya seems to find another level in big tournaments?
It's his "bring it on" attitude. The bigger the challenge, the more motivated he becomes. You see that mindset among special forces as well — they are trained to embrace tough situations. His attitude is: "Let's go for it. Whatever needs to be done, I'll do it."

What is his biggest strength?
His relentless desire to succeed. We saw that clearly at the All England. At times he was barely walking because of exhaustion, yet he could still smash with speed, power and accuracy. His playing style reminds me a little of Nadal and Muhammad Ali.

What work has gone into Lakshya consistency? One of the key things we are working on is removing those limitations — allowing him to open up mentally and go all out in terms of attitude. That doesn't mean abandoning tactics. It simply means having the mindset to embrace the challenge fully. At the All England we saw that balance — he played patiently but also attacked when needed.

Reuters

THE EQUALISER: Lamine Yamal scores from the penalty spot

Yamal denies Newcastle, Reds lose

Istanbul: Arne Slot was left to rue Liverpool's sloppy finishing as Galatasaray earned a 1-0 win in Tuesday's Champions League last-16 first leg. Slot's side lost to Mario Lemina's header early in the first half at the RAMS Stadium in Istanbul.

Bayern Munich and Atletico Madrid took giant strides toward the quarterfinals with big wins. Bayern thrashed Atalanta 6-1 without top scorer Harry Kane in the starting lineup. And Atletico made under-pressure Tottenham coach Igor Tudor pay for his bold call to drop first-choice goalkeeper Guglielmo Vicario by racing to a 3-0 lead inside 15 minutes. The Spanish giant eventually won 5-2.

Barcelona needed Lamine Yamal's penalty with the last kick of the game to rescue a 1-1 draw at Newcastle.

Even without the prolific Kane, Bayern all but sealed their place in the last eight with a dominant win at Atalanta. England captain Kane has scored 47 goals this season for club and country but was only fit enough to make the bench and in his absence Michael Olise scored twice. Serge Gnabry and Nicolas Jackson each scored and set up goals. Josip Stanisic and Jamal Musiala were also on target for the German champion.

Tottenham endured a nightmare start in Madrid, with backup keeper Antonin Kinsky substituted in the 17th minute after his mistakes led to two of Atletico's three early goals. Spurs coach Tudor had opted to leave out first choice Vicario — a decision that backfired spectacularly. Kinsky was making his Champions League debut and his slip and miskick in the sixth gave Marcos Llorente the chance to open the scoring.

Antoine Griezmann made it 2-0 for Atletico before Kinsky miskicked again and Julian Alvarez slotted into an empty net.

Kinsky looked inconsolable when he was replaced by Vicario, who conceded just five minutes after coming on — Robin Le Normand scoring Atletico's fourth.

Spurs rallied, but it will take an unlikely comeback in the second leg to avoid elimination. AGENCIES

Results (last 16, first leg): Galatasaray 1 (Lemina 7) bt Liverpool 0; Atalanta 1 (Pasalic 90+3) lost to Bayern Munich 6 (Stanisic 12, Olise 22, 64, Gnabry 25, Jackson 52, Musiala 67); Newcastle 1 (Barnes 86) drew with Barcelona 1 (Yamal 90+6-pen); Atletico Madrid 5 (Llorente 6, Griezmann 14, Alvarez 15, 55, Le Normand 22) Tottenham 2 (Porros 26, Solanke 76).

All England win, foundation of my coaching path

Pulella Gopichand

The story of the All England is very important, as it has definitely been a life-changing one for me. The victory gave me recognition, but crucially, it was the foundation on which I

25 YEARS HENCE

could become the coach I am and help build an ecosystem for badminton in the country.

In fact, the preparations that helped me win the All England were actually towards the 2000 Sydney Olympics.

I lived like a monk. I was training at Sports Authority of India and Ganguly Prasad was my coach there. I just spent hours meditating, manifesting, thinking that I'm going to win the Olympic medal. Even if you were to give me another chance today, with all the knowledge, I don't think I could have prepared or worked harder than I did on that day. Unfortunately, I lost early in Olympics, because after three knee surgeries — in 1994, '96 and '97 — my body was not the same. It couldn't handle the long, strenuous effort of playing on concrete flooring in Sydney. After a three-setter against Vladislav Druzchenko, my body didn't have the energy. My entire body was swollen and my knee had a golf ball kind of swelling. Things were very sad after the Olympic failure. I was like a zombie, didn't know what to do, but somehow pulled myself to work but with out expectation. With that kind of a mindset, I went into the All England of 2001. We started on a Saturday from Bangalore, but halfway through our auto journey to the airport, we heard that our visa has not been still done and that we had to come back on Monday.

We took a very roundabout trip to collect the visa in Delhi.

Then we had a long journey from Delhi to Bandar Abbas in Iran, Frankfurt and Birmingham — we started on a Monday morning and reached on Tuesday evening. Those days, All England had a 64-player draw (now 32) and we still were playing on concrete. We had two matches on Day One, a Wednesday, two matches on Day Two. Although, I won inside two games each, I had to go through a lot of strain. Fifteen points was a tiring format, and the concrete floor wasn't helping my cause. We didn't have physios or nutrition specialists. My food was roti, daal paalak and chicken at the same restaurant the whole week. After matches, I would lie on ice once in the physio room at the stadium and then in my room.

The matches took a heavy toll on my body and with a lot of swelling, I still somehow managed to win. The biggest relief after the title was that I don't have to go through pain for another day. To recover from and to plan the match, I think it's purely God's grace. I was lucky that I had Dr Ashok Rajagopal and solid support from my team comprising Ganguly Prasad and Le Roy D'Sa sir.

(As told to Manne Ratnakar)

SNAP SHOTS

INDIA RECEIVE ₹25 CRORE PRIZE MONEY

Champions India received $2,639,423 (approx Rs 25 crore), the biggest share from the prize money pool after winning the men's T20 World Cup as the ICC on Wednesday announced the distribution of a record $11.25 million players' prize fund. Runners-up New Zealand earned $1,422,692 (Rs 13 crore approx).

Abhishek, Kishan make it 1-2: Ishan Kishan moved up to a career-high second spot, trailing top-ranked Abhishek Sharma by four points in the latest ICC list for T20I batters published on Wednesday. Kishan (871 points) earned a new career-high rating. However, there was a change in the T20I bowlers' ranking list, with Varun Chakravarthy losing the top spot to Afghanistan's Rashid Khan.

Smriti leads Indian presence: Smriti Mandhana headlined the Indian presence in the women's player draft for The Hundred, while compatriot Richa Ghosh secured a deal worth GBP 50,000 (approximately Rs 61 lakh) and all-rounder Deepti Sharma also earned a contract during the auction in London on Wednesday. The League will start on July 21.

Kiran stuns Loh: Kiran George produced a straight-game win over former world champion Loh Kean Yew of Singapore in a mixed day for Indian shuttlers at the Swiss Open in Basel on Wednesday. Kiran outwitted Loh 23-21, 21-19 to set up a clash with Hong Kong's Jason Gunawan. Gunawan defeated Kidambi Srikanth 15-21, 21-12, 21-4. Earlier, several Indian players, including Ayush Shetty and Tanvi Sharma, bowed out.

Jasmine takes lead: Jasmine Shekar fired a two-under 70 to take a one-shot lead over amateur Lavanya Gupta (71) in the opening round of the fifth leg of the Women's Pro Golf Tour in Gurugram on Wednesday. Mannat Brar was sole third with even par 72.

Asian Weightlifting C'ships in India postponed: The Asian Weightlifting Championships, scheduled to be held in Ahmedabad in April, has been postponed to May due to the ongoing conflict in West Asia.

Priyansh, Ambekar and Sahil advance: Priyansh Sehrawat, L Ambekar and Sahil Duhan registered convincing victories as the Indian youth boxing team continued their impressive run in the World Boxing Futures Cup in Bangkok on Wednesday. Priyansh (70kg) scored a dominant 5-0 victory. Ambekar (50kg) also secured a 5-0 win, while Sahil (60kg) too recorded a commanding 5-0 win.

'Iran cannot participate in WC': Iran cannot participate in the 2026 World Cup after the United States killed their leader Ayatollah Ali Khamene, sports minister Ahmad Donyamali said on Wednesday. "Considering that this corrupt regime has assassinated our leader, under no circumstances can we participate in the World Cup," the minister told state television.

Maini to continue with HRT: Arjun Maini will continue with HRT Ford Racing in the 2026 DTM season, the team announced on Wednesday. Maini remains one of their key drivers as the team enters the new season.

'VVS, I not big talkers in middle'

Rahul Dravid and VVS Laxman forged a series-defining partnership in the Eden Gardens Test to script one of the greatest turnarounds in cricket. Talking to TOI, the former India captain reflects on the tactical calls, the marathon stand and how the victory proved to be a turning point for Indian cricket

Pix: Getty Images, Syed Asif

THESE TWO! VVS Laxman and Rahul Dravid share a chat in the dressing room during the Eden Test

Manuja.Veerappa@timesofindia.com

TOI Exclusive

How was your form leading up to the Eden Test?
It was patchy, to be honest. I had scored runs in the series against Zimbabwe leading into this Australia series. In domestic cricket, I got some runs. So, from that perspective, I was feeling quite good. In the first Test in Mumbai, I batted for a long time in the second innings but got out to Shane Warne. The same happened in the first innings at Eden. But in the context of the series, there was so much hype and noise around it that it almost felt like I was really out of form. In reality, I hadn't made runs in three innings.

Considering all of that, was it extra special that the hundred came off Warne's bowling?
Warne was a phenomenal bowler and an absolute legend of the game. There were times I felt that he had the wood over me because I hadn't really put up a big score against him. Against bowlers like him, you want to get a big score, so it felt good to be able to score runs and to be able to play him as well as I did.

What was your reaction when you were told that you would have to bat at No.6 in the second innings?
It was John Wright and Sourav Ganguly's decision. They came to me and asked for my thoughts about it. It seemed pretty reasonable because Laxman had batted beautifully in the first innings. It made sense to put the guy who was in form up ahead of me at that stage. It did feel a bit odd because it had just been a couple of low-scoring innings for me, so it did cross my mind whether we were overreacting. But the conversation was about putting a bit of pressure back on the Aussies, and I realised that maybe that is the best thing to do. And it worked out brilliantly.

You have had some amazing partnerships with Laxman.
I've always really enjoyed batting alongside Laxman because, firstly, he's a fantastic player and a great batsman to watch. So, you've got a really good seat in the house. He did not get frazzled or hassled by too many things. We played a lot of cricket together for the South Zone and some junior cricket as well. We'd communicate a little bit, but we're not like out-and-out big talkers in the middle. So that suited my game as well.

He was one of those players who had skills to play all around the wicket, and it didn't feel like there was any kind of bowling that could trouble him. So, when you bat alongside a player like him, it gives you confidence and belief.

Apart from Eden 2001, you have had other big stands with him, too.
He was someone who had shown that propensity to score big runs. He could bat for a long time, maintain concentration and wasn't going to do anything silly. So, you knew that if you did your part, there was an opportunity to form a really big partnership.

You batted for 446 minutes in that second innings with Laxman. What was the one routine you followed?
I had a personal routine that I followed before each delivery, which was just two taps of the bat while moving my feet in a particular way. I took a couple of breaths, and sometimes said to myself, 'Watch the ball.' Laxman had his own routine, and he liked to draw a lot of lines on the pitch and tap the bat. I would pull his leg at times and not put my bat out for him to tap, and he would get a bit grumpy about it.

Was your reaction after getting the ton directed towards anyone in the press box?
People never saw you react that way before or after...
That's been blown out of proportion a little bit. I think in some ways, there was a lot of pressure on me. You can't really react to everything people say. I understand that better now because I'm a bit wiser, more mature and have seen a fair bit of life in 25 years. But I genuinely felt that there was a lot of negativity around the team and a lot of criticism, which was a little bit uncalled for at that stage. Also, some of that criticism directed towards me was a bit unjustified. I'd only gone three innings without scoring runs.

I was young and feeling the pressure. As a young man fighting for your place in the side — for your career and the team — you don't always have the maturity to fully understand the situation. I'm happy enough to admit 25 years later that maybe I did let things get to me, which I should not have. But it wasn't meant for anyone in particular. It was a relief and a sort of outlet for the pressure I was feeling. Whatever may be my reputation, so to speak, I have always been human.

As you and Laxman walked back into the dressing room after each session. What was the chat in the dressing room?
It was about continuing to put pressure back on them. Just being in the moment and not trying to think too far ahead. Until the last session of Day Five, we weren't even thinking about winning. In fact, we had to bat for a while the next day, and we bowled them out.

The runs we piled up in the second innings (657/7 decl.) in some ways were a backhanded compliment to the Australians because they were such a strong team that we believed that we had to put up so many runs on the board.

Did the declaration come late?
People felt that way. There can always be different opinions on that. But the thinking in the team was to put them under pressure so that they had to defend rather than attack and never force us to push fielders back. Having men around the bat all the time created constant pressure and, in turn, chances. If we had given them even a sliver of an opportunity to attack, the game could have looked very different.

What was the belief in the dressing room on Day 5?
There was a certain sense of belief because we knew the ball was keeping low and the wicket was turning. Harbhajan Singh bowled beautifully and was at the top of his game.

While you, Laxman and Harbhajan were the headline acts, there were some unsung heroes too at Eden, weren't there?
Some people made a really incredible impact. Sachin's wickets were absolutely critical after tea on Day Five. We don't get those wickets often, and especially getting Adam Gilchrist out was a huge one. Venky's (Venkatesh Prasad) 42-run stand with Laxman in the first innings, (Sadagopan) Ramesh's catches, were all crucial. Also, really good captaincy by Sourav. He also got a crucial 48 in the second innings. It felt like a total team effort at the end of it. But of course, when you have a couple of big performances like that, then people tend to recognise and remember only those.

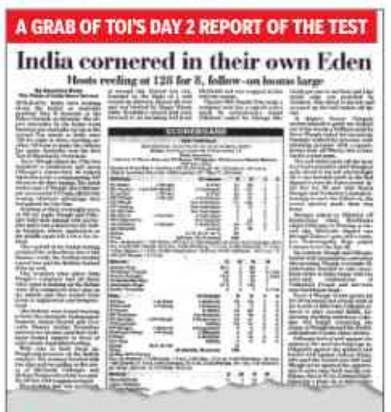
At the start of Day 2, Australia were 291/8. But Steve Waugh and Jason Gillespie frustrated India with a big partnership, adding 133 runs for the 9th wicket. After Waugh's dismissal for 110, Gillespie and Glenn McGrath shared 43 runs for the final wicket. The last two wickets contributed 176, taking Australia from 269/8 to 445.

Did the Eden Test make captains wary of enforcing the follow-on?
I think that's true. In some ways, I was not surprised that Australia gave us a follow-on. After the Eden Test, I think in some ways, you started seeing teams being more circumspect about giving the follow-on. Teams were a bit more wary of enforcing the follow-on, especially in subcontinental conditions. I think we started doing that less. I think as an Indian team, we started recognising that there's probably no need to enforce the follow-on that much when you have so much time left in the game. Time is a crucial factor in these things. I think people have looked at the follow-on differently after that Test.

What did the Eden Test do to Indian cricket?
It did a lot, because it gave us a certain stability. John Wright was our first foreign coach, and there were some doubts and criticism about whether that would work and what might happen. If we hadn't won the series, I couldn't answer what might have happened. But certainly, the pressure would have been on the whole team.

But the fact that we were able to go on to win that series and play some very good cricket, I think, meant that it gave us as a group a little bit of breathing space. It also allowed us to build from there and steer the team in a certain direction. Even without that win, I believe Indian cricket would eventually have reached where it needed to. But it might have taken a little longer. That victory also triggered a phase when we began winning the odd Test and series abroad.

A GRAB OF TOI'S DAY 2 REPORT OF THE TEST


India cornered in their own Eden
Hosts reeling at 128 for 5, follow-on looms large

Day 2 Brief Scores: Australia 445 in 131.5 overs (Steve Waugh 110, Matthew Hayden 97, Justin Langer 58, Jason Gillespie 46; Harbhajan Singh 7/123) vs India 128/8 in 46 overs (VVS Laxman 26*, Venkatapathy Raju 3*; Glenn McGrath 4/18)

Have you retained any souvenirs from that Test?
I have the bat tucked in somewhere and a couple of other souvenirs.

Twenty-five years, does it feel like a lifetime?
People keep reminding me of the innings. I always cherish it because I think in some ways people remember what they were doing then. For me, that's really nice because it gives me a feeling that I was able to be a part of someone's memory for doing something that I'm expected to do, which is just part of my job.

Where would you rate the win in your career?
I've probably batted better in other tougher situations, and there have been other knocks that have been better in terms of just pure batting satisfaction. But, in the context of everything that happened and what it did for Indian cricket, and to so many of our careers, I'd certainly say that it's high up there.

B'desh prevail

Bangladesh pacer Nahid Rana claimed his first five-wicket haul in ODIs to lead his team to a eight-wicket win over Pakistan in their opening match on Wednesday. Rana returned figures of 5-24 to skittle out Pakistan for 114, a total Bangladesh overhauled in 15.1 overs in Mirpur to take a 1-0 lead in the three-match series. **Brief scores: Pakistan: 114 all out in 30.4 overs** (Sahibzada Farhan 27, Faheem Ashraf 37; Mehidy Hasan Miraz 3-29, Nahid Rana 5-24) **lost to Bangladesh: 115/2 in 15.1 overs** (Tanzid Hasan 67 n.o, Najmul Hossain Shanto 27). AFP

Sinner reaches quarters; Sabalenka cruises

TENNIS

World number two **Jannik Sinner** survived a stern test from Joao Fonseca on Tuesday to reach the Indian Wells quarterfinals, while women's world number one Aryna Sabalenka eased past 16th seed Naomi Osaka 6-2, 6-4 to progress to the women's last eight. Sinner was pushed hard by the 19-year-old Brazilian, trailing 6-3 in the first set before rallying to close out the match 7-6(6), 7-6(4).

Reuters

Meanwhile, in the first meeting between the two four-time Grand Slam champions since 2018 - when Osaka beat Sabalenka at the US Open en route to her maiden major title - the Belarusian's power proved too much for the former world No. 1 on Tuesday. Elsewhere, Australia's Talia Gibson enjoyed the biggest win of her career, beating Italy's world No. 7 Jasmine Paolini 7-5, 2-6, 6-1 in her first match against a top-10 player.

BHAMBRI-GORANSSON PAIR IN QUARTERS

India's top doubles player Yuki Bhambri and his partner Goran Goransson advanced to the quarterfinals of the men's doubles event after a 6-4, 6-4 win over Sander Arends and Jiri Lehecka.

Results (4th round): Men: 30-Arthur Fils (Fra) bt 9-Felix Auger-Aliassime (Can) 6-3, 7-6 (11/9); 4-Alexander Zverev (Ger) bt 21-Frances Tiafoe (USA) 6-3, 6-4; 25-Learner Tien (USA) bt 18-Alejandro Fokina (Esp) 4-6, 6-1, 7-6 (7/4); 2-Jannik Sinner (Ita) bt Joao Fonseca (Bra) 7-6 (8/6), 7-6 (7/4). **Women:** 1-Aryna Sabalenka (Blr) bt 16-Naomi Osaka (Jpn) 6-2, 6-4; 10-Victoria Mboko (Can) bt 16-Amanda Anisimova (USA) 6-4, 6-1; 14-Linda Nosková (Cze) bt 31-Alexandra Eala (Phi) 6-2, 6-0; Talia Gibson (Aus) bt 7-Jasmine Paolini (Ita) 7-5, 2-6, 6-1. AGENCIES

AIFF stops payment to vendor

KIT FIASCO

Marcus.Mergulhao
@timesofindia.com

Panaji: The All India Football Federation (AIFF) has stopped payment to the vendor and asked its integrity officer, Vivek Dhir, to investigate the kit fiasco in Australia that left the Indian women's team without proper jerseys, 48 hours before the AFC Women's Asian Cup opener against Vietnam last week.

"The integrity officer will check the kit issue and find out who is at fault," said AIFF deputy secretary general M Satyanarayan. "Action will definitely be taken. We have stopped payment to the vendor, pending investigation. The officer will also look into the letter (which the players wrote). All aspects are being checked."

The national women's football team was forced to hurriedly arrange for playing kits locally in Australia after the set of jerseys sent by the AIFF appeared to have been manufactured for age-group teams and "did not fit at least 80% of the 26-member squad." Senior players were alarmed when they tried the jerseys and, given the seriousness, decided to officially write to the AIFF on March 2. India captain Sweety Devi, Manisha Kalyan, Grace Dangmei, Sangita Basfore, Panthoi Chanu, Sanju, Pyari Xaxa and Shreya Hooda signed the letter.

Krishika and spinners shine

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Krishika Reddy's unbeaten half century and a fine show from the spinners helped Karnataka register a four-wicket win against Bihar in the Women's U-23 One Day Trophy in Jaipur on Wednesday.

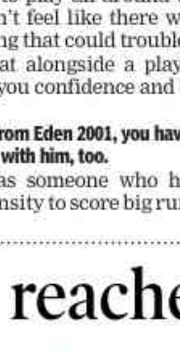
Opting to bat, Bihar opener and captain Vaidehi Yadav (64) waged a lone battle before they were bundled out for 129 runs in 38.5 overs. Spinners Vandita and Saloni took three wickets each while Pooja Kumari took two. Karnataka lost wickets regularly during their chase, but opener Krishika struck an unbeaten 62 to see her team home. **Brief scores: Bihar: 129 in 38.5 overs** (Vaidehi Yadav 64; Pooja Kumari 2-26, Vandita Rao 3-18, Saloni P 3-21) **lost to Karnataka: 131/6 in 31.3 overs** (Krishika Reddy 62 n.o; Surya 2-38, Vaidehi 2-28)

U-23 ONE DAY

Ton-up Swaroop stars

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Swaroop SH (104) powered Infosys Cricket Club to a 68-run victory against Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike in the KSCA Group II (Div II) league-cum-knockout tournament here recently.



Opting to bat, Infosys recovered from 22/3 as Swaroop smashed a 60-ball ton. His innings helped Infosys to 170/7 in 20 overs. In reply, BBMP, were restricted to 101/7 in 20 overs. S Shylesh (43) top-scored for BBMP. Ajay Bhide and Raghavendra HS sclaped two wickets each.

Brief scores: Infosys: 170/7 in 20 overs (Swaroop SH 104, Bharath Kumar 35 n.o; S Shylesh 2-35, Santhosha Naik 2-29) **bt BBMP: 101/7 in 20 overs** (Shylesh 43; Ajay Bhide 2-15, Raghavendra HS 2-14). **KSP: 133 in 19.5 overs** (Thejas L 3-13, Vinay KB 2-12, Gaurav 2-22) **lost to Continental: 135/3 in 15.3 overs** (Thejas 59; Karthik J 26 n.o, Madhusudan 2-24). **Bosch, B'luru: 119/8 in 20 overs** (Samarth Srinivas 59, Gagan CM 28; Somala Kumar 3-17, Shashidhar HS 2-16) **bt Railway Institute: 111/6 in 20.0 overs** (Shashidhar 32, Sitaram Meena 25 n.o; Amogh R 2-23, Geeth Netala 2-24). **Triton SC, Mysuru: 80 in 18.1 overs** (Santosh Singh 3-19, Ambresh K 2-17, Aaron Joseph 3-12) **lost to Bhagirathi: 81/3 in 7.2 overs** (Aadarsh Prajwal S 37, Prazwal T 2-25). **IAF, Jalahalli: 111/9 in 20 overs** (Ashish Kumar 38; Karna Vamshi 3-12, Santhosh M 2-28) **lost to Titan: 112/4 in 15.1 overs** (Santhosh 48, Dheeraj Mohan 25). **L&T: 142/9 in 20 overs** (Chinmaya MA 53, Vikram Ananth 31; Gautham Reddy 3-17) **lost to BEL: 143/3 in 16.5 overs** (Gautham R Reddy 78, Shivu M 28 n.o). **SRI, Mysuru: 145 in 20 overs** (Suresh M 43, Nishit Srivatsa 29, Shashank HC 3-13, Sharath C 2-25) **bt SWR CW, Mysuru: 126/9 in 18.1 overs** (Srinidhi V 26, Shashank 29; Dhananjaya S 4-24, Suhas BS 2-25). **B'lore Telephone: 91 in 18.2 overs** (Yashwantha 36, Akash LN 2-29, Koushik BP 3-10) **bt K'taka Postal: 85 in 15.3 overs** (G Murugan 3-16, Yashwantha 2-25, S Praveen 2-17).

Junior state basketball from March 25

The State junior basketball championship (U-18 years) for boys and girls will held in Bengaluru from March 25 to 31. Players born on are after January 1, 2008 are eligible, the KSBBA said in a press release. TNN

Sharath guides AGORC home

Bengaluru: BR Sharath scored an unbeaten ton to help AGORC score a nine-wicket win over DELL CC in the KSCA Group II (Div I) league-cum-knockout tournament here recently. Batting first, DELL scored 146/5 in 20 overs with Rajesh Kanna (56) scoring a half-century while Madhusudhan Rao chipped in with an unbeaten 43. In reply, Sharath, who hit seven fours and ten sixes, led AGORC's charge as they reached the target in 13 overs.

KSCA GROUP II

Brief scores: DELL: 146/5 in 20 overs (Madhusudhan Rao 43 n.o, Rajesh Kanna 56; Arjun Gowda 2-23) **lost to AGORC: 147/1 in 13 overs** (BR Sharath 110 n.o (49b; 7x4; 10x6). TNN

Kaur does the 'trick as India seal WC berth

Shiva.Gundra@timesofindia.com

Hyderabad: The Indian camp was ecstatic after sealing a World Cup berth with a 4-1 win over Wales in the final Pool B match of the FIH women's World Cup qualifiers at the Gachibowli stadium on Wednesday. India also sealed the top spot in the pool and a semifinal berth, but more importantly they can now focus on the World Cup in Belgium and the Netherlands later this year.

While top three teams from the tournament get a direct entry to the World Cup, the fourth spot will go to the highest ranked team. With England, the highest ranked team likely to finish in the top three, India, with the second best ranking, are assured of a berth even if they don't finish in the top three here.

India's Navneet Kaur, who scored a hat-trick on Wednesday, however, was keen to win the tournament and enter the World Cup as the winners here. India will take on Italy in the semifinal while England face Scotland in the other last four clash on Friday.

Kaur (29th, 34th and 55th) apart, Sakshi Rana (7th) also got on the scoresheet, while Betsan Thomas (39') pulled one back for Wales.

HOCKEY

India drew first blood through Sakshi, who found the back of the net with a powerful backhand. India could have scored more in the first quarter but Ishika failed to clear the Wales' goalie in a one-on-one duel.

The visitors got an opportunity to find the equaliser in the second quarter when they got two penalty corners but Indian goalkeeper Bichu Devi thwarted their attempts.

Kaur converted a PC to make it 2-0 at break. India got back-to-back PCs four minutes into the third quarter and Kaur once again converted for her second goal.

The visitors stepped up their game and got on the scoresheet as Thomas managed to sneak one past Devi.

The world No.24 team had another great chance four minutes later, but Elizabeth Bingham wasted a penalty stroke. A few minutes later, India got a penalty stroke and Kaur completed the tally for India.

Results: India 4 (Navneet Kaur 3, Sakshi Rana) **bt Wales 1** (Betsan Thomas). **England 2** (Grace Balsdon, Holly Hunt) **bt Austria 0**. **Italy 1** (Federica Carta) **drew Korea 1** (Jiyun Cho). **Scotland 3** (Katherine Holdgate 2, Jennifer Eadie) **bt Uruguay 1** (Teresa Vianna).
SFs line-up: India vs Italy; England vs Scotland.

Karnataka's Kishan takes lead after first round

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Former national champion **Kishan R** of Karnataka took the lead at the end of the first round at the National Tenpin Bowling Championships here on Wednesday.

NATIONAL TENPIN

After posting scores of 196 and 190 in the first two games, Kishan shifted gears and dominated the lanes posting superb scores of 255, 213, 233 and 263 closing the second block with a total pinfall of 1350 at an impressive average of 225.

He topped the standings with an overall pinfall of 2518 from 12 games, with an average of 209.83. Former National Champion Dhruv Sarda of Delhi also came up with a strong performance during the second block. He recorded a total pinfall of 1329 at an average of 221.5 in the second block to trail the lead by 108 pins. Defending champion Akaash Ashok Kumar (2405 pins) of Karnataka was in third place followed by Prathyek Satya (2395, Karnataka) and Parthiban J (2391, Tamil Nadu).

Meanwhile, 13-year-old Anirudhan S of Tamil Nadu became the youngest bowler to qualify for the second round. He scored a total pinfall of 1188 at an average of 198, making up for the lapses in the opening block. His spirited comeback saw him finish in the 18th spot. The top 40 bowlers advanced to the second round. **The top 10 (Karnataka, unless mentioned):** 1. Kishan R (2518), 2. Dhruv Sarda (2410), 3. Akaash Ashok Kumar (2405), 4. Prathyek Satya (2395), 5. Parthiban J (2391, TN), 6. Ganesh NT (2391, TN), 7. Sahil Punjabi (2377), 8. Ankit JG (2337, Guj), 9. Mahipal Singh (2322, TN), 10. Beni Gopal L (2321, Ben).

REGD. NO. CPMG/KA/GPO-31/2003-05. RNI NO. 45466/85. Published for the proprietors, Bennett, Coleman & Co. Ltd., by Manjeet Singh Dhami at Bennett Coleman & Co Ltd., Elixir Chancery Building, 1st, 2nd and 4th Floor, 135, Residency Road, Shanthala Nagar, Bengaluru – 560025 (Phones: Office: EPABX - 080-42208000, Editorial: 080-46787878) and printed by him at Bennett Coleman & Co Ltd., The Times of India Press, No. 9/10/11-A, 4th Main, KIADB Bommasandra Industrial Area, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore - 560 099 (Ph : 080-22899999) Regd office: Dr. D.N. Road, Mumbai - 400 001. Editor (Bengaluru Market): Neelam Raaj- responsible for selection of news under PRB Act. © All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission is prohibited.

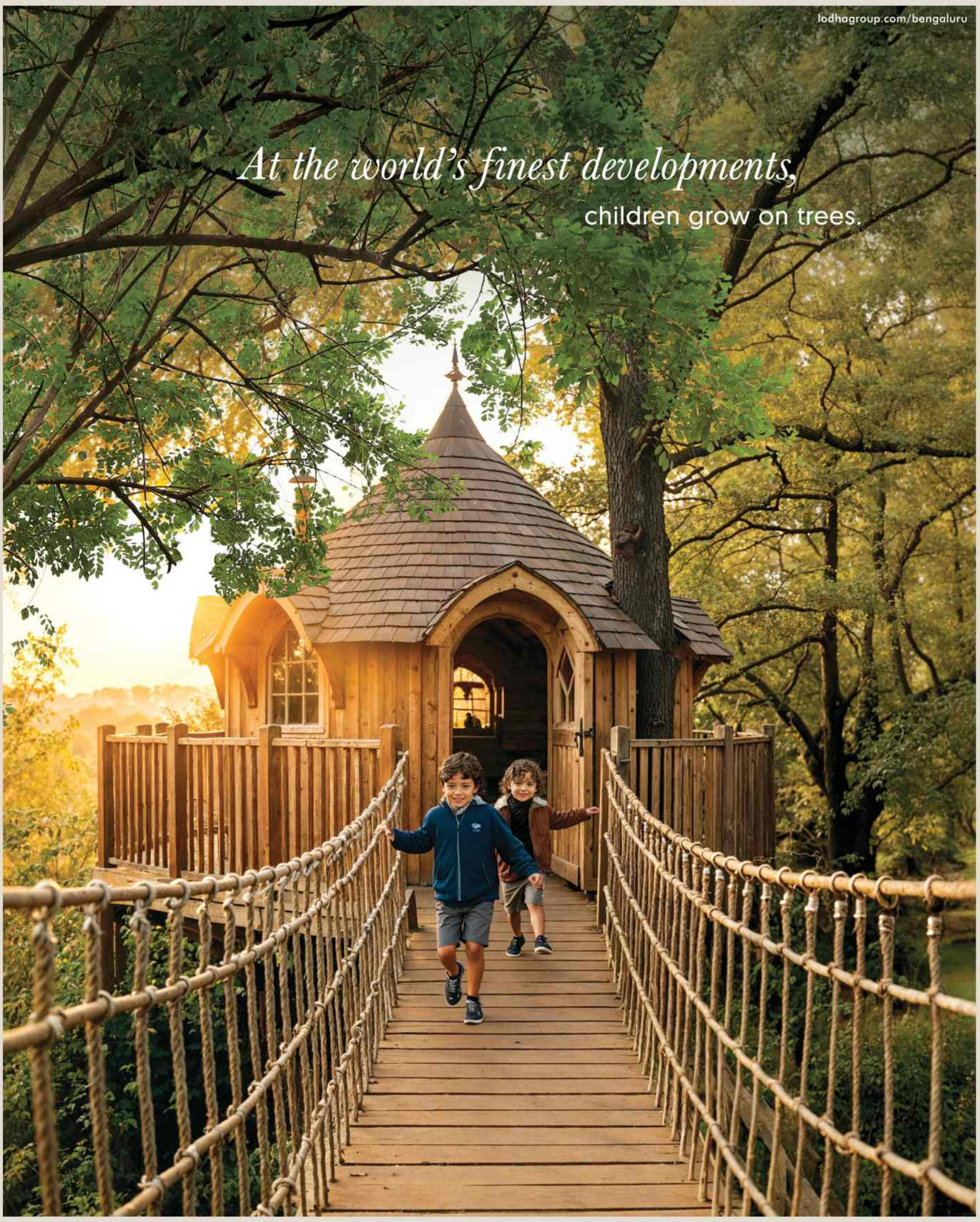
BENNETT, COLEMAN & CO. LTD. | Estd. 1838 | VOL. 43 NO. 61 BENGALURU | THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2026 | METRO | PAGES 26 | PRICE ₹6

THE TIMES OF INDIA

INCLUDES 4 PAGES OF BANGALORE TIMES

INDIA'S LARGEST ENGLISH NEWSPAPER | To subscribe call 1800 1200 004 or visit subscribe.timesofindia.com

Ex-CM Arvind Kejriwal writes to Delhi high court seeking transfer of excise case from the court of Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma to 'impartial' bench



Our tree houses and play zones are designed to arouse curiosity and foster creativity through imaginative play and exploration.

LODHA

ONLY 1 INDIAN REAL ESTATE COMPANY IS ON THE 'WORLD'S MOST TRUSTWORTHY COMPANIES' LIST.

Over 2,00,000 companies across the globe were evaluated for Newsweek's World's Most Trustworthy Companies in 2025.
Only 1,000 made the cut. Just 18 in real estate. Only 1 is from India.

LODHA

BENNETT, COLEMAN & CO. LTD. | Estd. 1838 | VOL. 43 NO. 61 BENGALURU | THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2026 | METRO | PAGES 26 | PRICE ₹6

THE TIMES OF INDIA

INCLUDES 4 PAGES OF BANGALORE TIMES

INDIA'S LARGEST ENGLISH NEWSPAPER | To subscribe call 1800 1200 004 or visit subscribe.timesofindia.com

Abhishek Sharma retains top spot in latest ICC T20I rankings and Ishan Kishan, who scored 317 runs in the T20 World Cup, moves to career-high second spot

Glucose Monitor
Diet
Insulin Levels
Check Blood Sugar
HbA1c#
Kidney Profile Test
Lipid Profile
Workout
UACR* Test

Your Diabetes Puzzle is incomplete without

This simple urine test completes your diabetes management. UACR* value of >30mg/g increases risk of developing Heart and Kidney Disease[1]

2 out of 5 diabetics develop Chronic Kidney Disease [2,3]
Talk to Your Doctor to get a UACR* test done now!

UACR* is **The Test That Completes It**

BAYER

A kidney health initiative by Bayer.

Learn more at **uacrtest.in**

Disclaimer : This content is intended for informational and general educational purposes only & is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health care provider with any questions you may have regarding your medical condition. Never disregard professional medical advice or delay seeking it because of something you've read in this content. Any form of reproduction, dissemination, copying, disclosure, modification, distribution, and/or publication of this article is strictly prohibited. This article is not intended to be an advertisement or solicitation. Although great care has been taken in compiling the information, Bayer Pharmaceuticals Pvt. Ltd.(Bayer) shall not be responsible/ liable in any way for the present and/or continued accuracy of the information or for any errors, omissions or inaccuracies in this publications whether arising from negligence or otherwise howsoever, or for any consequences arising there from. | Issued in public interest by Bayer. | Bayer Pharmaceuticals Pvt. Ltd. Bayer House. | Central Avenue, Hiranandani Estate, Thane West, Thane, Maharashtra 400607. Tel: +91-22-25311234. E-Mail : medicalinfo.india@bayer.com

Ref: [1] ADA Standard of Care in Diabetes. Diabetes Care 2026;49(Supplement_1):S246–S260 [2] Skolnik NS & Style AJ. Diabetes Ther. 2021;12:1613–1630 [3] Wu B, et al. BMJ Open Diabetes Res Care. 2016;4:e000154.

*UACR: Urine Albumin Creatinine Ratio. #Glycated Haemoglobin.

PP-KER-IN-0467-1 March 2026

AU SMALL FINANCE BANK

Still not banking with **AU?**

Up to

6.50%*

interest p.a. &
Monthly Interest Payment on

AU Savings Account

AU Current Account

Business Loans,
Trade & Forex Services,
Merchant Solutions,
Digital Banking Services

Soch Badlo, aur Bank Bhi

SCAN TO

OPEN ACCOUNT

*T&C Apply

India's first Small Finance Bank to get an **in-principle approval** from the RBI to become a **Universal Bank.**

2,726 Touchpoints | 21 States & 4 UTs | 1.25 Cr.+ Customers | 59,800+ Employees

1800 1200 1200 | www.au.bank.in

BENNETT, COLEMAN & CO. LTD. | Estd. 1838 | VOL. 43 NO. 61 | BENGALURU | THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2026

THE TIMES

INCLUSIVE OF BANGALORE TIMES |

UNION MINISTERS AND SEVERAL ENVOYS PRESENT AS EX-DIPLOMAT TARANJIT SINGH SANDHU SWORN IN AS DELHI'S NEW LG

In a first, SC allows passive euthanasia for man in coma

Harish Rana, 32, In Vegetative State For 13 Yrs

AmitAnand.Choudhary
@timesofindia.com

Tarun Rawat

Harish with his mother Nirmala Devi and father Ashok Rana in a photo taken by **TOI** in 2024. He was about 20 when he fell from the fourth floor of his PG accommodation and suffered a diffuse axonal injury

New Delhi: In the first approval of passive euthanasia, which was legalised by Supreme Court in 2011, the apex court on Wednesday allowed withdrawal of medical treatment to 32-year-old Harish Rana, who has been in a vegetative state for more than 13 years with irreversible and non-progressive brain damage, paving the way for nature to take its course and to end the agony of his parents who had to undergo the pain of witnessing their son's suffering every day.

▶EDIT: The I In Individual

A bench of Justices J B Pardiwala and K V Viswanathan took the "difficult decision" on the basis of reports of two medical boards that approved removal of life support system after personally interacting with Harish's parents. It said the continuation of medical treatment is not in best interest.

SC directed AIIMS Delhi to admit Harish in its palliative care centre and take steps for withdrawal or withholding of his medical treatment. "The resultant effect must not be the abandonment of the patient," it said.

▶'Die with dignity', P 8

Death a release for our son, says father

New Delhi/Ghaziabad: Wednesday brought closure to the family of Harish Rana with SC allowing withdrawal of life-sustaining treatment to the 32-year-old who has been in a vegetative state for 13 years, **report Anuja Jaiswal & Ayantika Pal.**

At the family's house in Ghaziabad's Raj Nagar Extension after the ruling, his father Ashok fought back tears. "For Harish and for us, this is a difficult decision, but it's in our interest. Watching your own child fade away is the deepest pain a parent can suffer. Yet, for him, death is a release, a gentle escape from the endless misery he has endured."

▶'Humane verdict', P 8

SC imposes life ban on three academics for 'corruption' chapter, seeks action on posts

Dhananjay.Mahapatra
@timesofindia.com

> (These three) either had no reasonable knowledge about the judiciary or deliberately and knowingly **misrepresented facts to project a negative image of Indian judiciary** before students of class eight (who are) in an impressionable age
>
> (The orders) **are not intended to prevent** objective and legitimate **criticism** of the institutional functioning of the judiciary...
>
> After the Feb 26 order (which banned the textbook) was passed, some elements of the so-called social media have acted and reacted irresponsibly. **We firmly believe in catching the bull by its horns...**
>
> **SC bench of CJI Surya Kant, Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul M Pancholi**

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Wednesday imposed a life ban on three academics, holding them responsible for "projecting a negative image of judiciary" by mentioning "corruption in judiciary" in the class 8 NCERT textbook.

The court also said it would take stringent action against social media "mischief mongers" who endorsed the objectionable content to malign the judiciary.

After banning the three academics from any assignment with the govt or govt-aided institutions or projects, a bench of CJI Surya Kant, Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul M Pancholi ordered that the Union govt identify the "social media mischief mongers".

NCERT director Dinesh Prasad Saklani and school education secretary Sanjay Kumar tendered an unconditional and unqualified apology to the SC for the "major and unpardonable lapse" and promised preventive steps against such lapses in future.

NCERT said the controversial chapter was drafted by Textbook Development Team (TDT) under the chairmanship of Prof Michel Danino and comprised Suparna Diwakar and Alok Prasanna Kumar. These three will not be associated with any activity of NCERT in future, it said.

These three "either had no reasonable knowledge about the judiciary or deliberately and knowingly misrepresented facts to project a negative image of Indian judiciary before students of class eight (who are) at an impressionable age", said the bench.

▶Domain experts, P 8

IN THE COURTS

- Meghalaya HC **quashes** Garo Hills Autonomous District Council notification **barring non-tribals from the election process**, which triggered violence in the district | FLAP INSIDE
- SC says all builders who siphoned off homebuyers' hard-earned money should be arrested, **questions CBI for filing chargesheet without custodial interrogation of bank officials** | FLAP INSIDE
- Setback for former MLA MP Kumaraswamy as **HC refuses to interfere with trial court's order** convicting him in eight cheque-bounce cases | P 6
- J'khand HC **transfers to CBI a police probe against ED officers** accused of assaulting a money-laundering accused at Ranchi office | FLAP INSIDE

Close shave for Farooq as man fires at wedding

National Conference president Farooq Abdullah and J&K deputy CM Surinder Choudhary escaped unhurt Wednesday after a man with a gun barged into a wedding venue in Jammu's Greater Kailash and fired a gunshot before he was overpowered. "We are safe but it is police's responsibility to say how it happened," Choudhary said, terming the attack "a big security lapse". Sources identified the arrested assailant as Kamal Singh Jamwal, a Jammu resident. TNN

Gunmen abduct 20 Naga people from 3 vehicles in Manipur

Suspected militants waylaid at least three vehicles passing by two tribal villages along Manipur's Ukhrul-Imphal Road Wednesday and abducted 20 Naga men, women and children at gunpoint, potentially igniting a fresh ethnic firestorm in a state already scarred by the Meitei-Kuki conflict. TNN

K'taka plans to train drivers and guides

Karnataka's tourism department will train autorickshaw and taxi drivers, tourist guides, porters and police personnel in soft skills to improve first impressions of visitors to the state. P 5

Centre warns cos on weight-loss drugs

Centre has warned pharma firms against promoting prescription weight-loss GLP-1 drugs, sold under brand names of Ozempic, Wegovy and Mounjaro, through ads. FLAP INSIDE

Finance panel to govt: Split property tax into EMIs and roll out amnesty, incentives

Sandeep.Moudgal
@timesofindia.com

Bengaluru: The Fifth State Finance Commission has proposed split payment (EMIs) of property tax and introduction of amnesty and incentives to encourage owners to clear tax dues.

The commission's report, tabled in the assembly Wednesday, dedicates a chapter to property tax reforms aimed at improving collection efficiency in the city.

The recommendations come at a time when the govt has started drone surveys of properties in Greater Bengaluru Authority to identify defaulters. Officials estimate dues across the five corporations of GBA run into lakhs of rupees. Bengaluru has 20.5 lakh properties, of which 5 lakh are not assessed.

The panel has urged authorities to complete door-to-door surveys and bring them under the tax net. This could generate up to Rs 700 crore in annual revenue for the five corporations, the report said.

▶'Congestion tax for roads', P 4

▶Payment apps, P 4

'USE DRONE TECH'

- To identify defaulters, state **govt has started drone surveys of properties in GBA areas** as dues run into lakhs of rupees
- To simplify digital payments, finance commission has **suggested that GBA tie up with payment mobile apps to streamline online transactions**
- It has also recommended **GBA use drone-like imaging technology to detect changes in building structures**

'Non-Sanatanis' barred from Badrinath and Kedarnath

Dehradun: The Badrinath-Kedarnath Temple Committee (BKTC) has approved a proposal to bar "non-Sanatanis" — people who do not follow Sanatan Dharma — from entering 47 temples under its jurisdiction in Uttarakhand, including Badrinath and Kedarnath.

The decision was taken at the temple panel's budget meeting at its Dehradun office, chaired by BKTC chairman Hemant Dwivedi.

Dwivedi had indicated in Jan that the committee was considering curbs on the entry of non-Hindus at the Char Dham shrines. He said, "The decision was taken to ensure that only those who believe and have faith in Sanatan Dharma visit the Char Dham shrines & other temples." TNN

▶Temple funds, P 8

Dial S for solutions: How Sachin helped Samson, and many others

Gaurav.Gupta@timesofindia.com

TIMES Special

How Sanju's fisherman grandpa shaped his cricketing journey

P 13

As he stepped up to receive his Player of the Tournament award after India had clinched the T20 World Cup Sunday, an emotional Sanju Samson recalled how he felt broken, his dreams shattered, after a wretched run of form. Fortunately for Samson, help was just a call away.

Samson became the latest in a long line of Indian batters to seek help from the God of cricket, Sachin Tendulkar. Like the others, he wasn't disappointed.

"When I was sitting outside in Australia (during the T20Is in Oct) ... I wasn't playing a game, I thought about what mindset is required," Samson said, "I reached out to 'Sir' and had long conversations with him."

Samson spoke from the heart about the value of Sachin's guidance — "that clarity, game preparation, awareness and game sense". He revealed, "Even the night before the final, Sir called me up to check how I am feeling."

There's a reason Sachin has been referred to as a 'university of batting' by Sunil Gavaskar, himself once a mentor to Tendulkar. Former India head coach and former South African opening batter Gary Kirsten, too, had referred to Tendulkar in similar terms.

Despite spending over a decade away from international cricket, Tendulkar still keenly watches games and makes sharp observations about a batter's technique. The Master doesn't air these observations publicly, but if the player approaches him, he is always known to be ready to help.

▶Keeps things simple, P 15

SC warns CBI against eyewash in probe into builders, bankers

'Arrest Cheats, Refund Money Of Homebuyers'

AmitAnand.Choudhary
@timesofindia.com

SC asked CBI how it filed a chargesheet without custodial interrogation

New Delhi: Questioning CBI for filing a chargesheet against financial institution officials and builders, for allegedly cheating homebuyers, without custodial interrogation, Supreme Court on Wednesday told the agency that no one should be treated as above the law and asked it to complete the probe in a time-bound manner.

A bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul M Pancholi said all those builders who had siphoned off homebuyers' earnings should be arrested to find out where the money went and it should be recovered and refunded. The bench also expressed displeasure over the slow progress of CBI's probe.

"How can you file a chargesheet without holding a custodial interrogation? This will lead to an eyewash," the bench said.

In view of the rising number of such cases across the country, additional solicitor general Aishwarya Bhati submitted that some should be probed by state police. SC rejected this plea, saying that permitting a parallel probe would lead to chaos. The court said if the state police had been competent, it would not have handed over the probe to CBI.

SC said CBI could not wriggle out of the case and let down the millions of homebuyers who were suffering. "We disapprove of the stand taken by CBI," the bench said, and allowed the agency to seek assistance from state DGP personnel and logistics support.

"As of now we do not want to comment on the probe undertaken by CBI but all that we want to observe is that no one should be treated above the law and investigation must be brought to a logical conclusion," the bench said.

The court asked CBI to give a time frame by which the probe would be completed as it could not go on indefinitely. It asked a competent officer of the agency to file an affidavit. "This court cannot wait for an indefinite period for the conclusion of the investigation... any delay will only lead to more agony for the homebuyers who have already been harassed by the builders and developers, apparently in collusion and connivance with financial institutions and banks," it said.

The court also clarified that affected parties, including homebuyers, banks and builders, should submit their claims, suggestions and recommendations to the amicus curiae, who would then examine them and place appropriate material before the court.

It directed CBI to carefully examine the report submitted by amicus curiae Rajiv Jain last year, particularly the areas of investigation identified in it.

HC transfers probe against ED officers to CBI

Ranchi: Jharkhand HC on Wednesday ordered state police to hand over to CBI the investigation into a case lodged against ED officials by a money laundering accused, who alleged he was assaulted at the agency's office in Ranchi, reports **Chandrajit Mukherjee**.

Santosh Kumar, an employee of the drinking water and sanitation department facing an ED probe in an alleged Rs 23 crore scam, visited the office on Jan 12. He later lodged an FIR with airport police station alleging he was tortured by ED officers.

Police raided the ED office on Jan 15 morning. The police action was reported to authorities, and ED assistant director Pratik and assistant enforcement officer Shubham Bharti moved the HC challenging the FIR filed against them. They told the HC that Santosh was never summoned and had visited the office of his own volition. Justice Sanjay Kumar Dwivedi heard the matter on Feb 24. TNN

HC bins 'only STs in polls' order, Meghalaya district stays tense

Manosh Das | TNN

Shillong: Meghalaya HC on Wednesday quashed a controversial notification making submission of ST certificates mandatory for candidates filing nominations for the Garo Hills Autonomous District Council (GHADC) elections, seeking to douse tensions in the West Garo Hills involving the local community and supporters of non-tribal poll aspirants.

The verdict, which came on a petition by politician Enamul Hoque, prompted the Conrad Sangma govt to postpone the April 10 polls to the 29-seat autonomous council that administers all five Garo Hills districts.

In a video message, Sangma said that given the situation in the Garo hills, including violence in which two lives were lost early Monday, the NPP-led govt had decided to keep the GHADC elections on hold for now. "We will sit and decide how to take this procedure ahead," he said.

Mobs torched the NPP office in the district headquarters town of Tura, rained stones on the SP's office and clashed with police amid curfew and a flag march by the Army

Mobs torched the NPP office in the district headquarters town of Tura, rained stones on the SP's office and clashed with police amid curfew and a flag march by the Army. Late in the evening, Sangma issued a statement saying that he had been informed about a group planning to burn down his house in Tura and attack his family.

"In accordance with protocol, I was advised to relocate, but I refused. I am not afraid. My life rests in the hands of the Lord. As an A·chik (Garo), I draw courage from the legacy of PA Sangma (the CM's late father and former Lok Sabha Speaker), and remain committed to serving my people with integrity," he said.

The CM said the attacks on govt properties, places of worship and homes were unacceptable and would be appropriately dealt with.

Meghalaya Board of School Education cancelled the HSSLC exams scheduled for March 11 and 12 in West Garo Hills, saying fresh dates would be announced later.

While striking down the notification that triggered the unrest, Justice Hamarsan Singh Thangkhiew said participation of non-tribals in elections to the district councils, which have been "primarily established" for the benefit of Scheduled Tribes, had stoked a "fierce debate". The violent fallout of the unrest now requires the judiciary to step in, he said.

Probe MP Dalit woman's death, SC instructs CBI

New Delhi: Supreme Court on Wednesday directed CBI to conduct a preliminary inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the death of a 20-year-old Dalit woman in MP's Sagar district in 2024. It rejected the plea of the state that the case was politically motivated, and said the truth must come out.

A bench of Justices M M Sundresh and N Kotiswar Singh said its conscience did not allow it to accept state govt's plea, and ordered an inquiry by the central agency. The court left it to CBI to take a call on registering an FIR.

SC had last year issued notice on a petition by the woman's mother, who was seeking a CBI or SIT probe into the deaths of three family members. "We direct CBI to conduct a preliminary inquiry on the circumstances surrounding the death of the girl," SC said. TNN

Govt directs Telegram to disable channels hosting pirated media

Times News Network

Some channels contained more than 2,000 links associated with distribution of films and series

New Delhi: The Centre has directed messaging platform Telegram to disable access to several channels accused of distributing pirated films and web series, asking the intermediary to comply within three hours of the notice being received.

In a notification issued on Wednesday, the ministry of information & broadcasting invoked provisions of Information Technology Act, 2000, and Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, to order the removal of the channels and their content.

The order stated that certain Telegram channels were hosting and distributing copyrighted material owned or licensed by OTT platforms, producers and other content owners without authorisation, in violation of Copyright Act, 1957.

The notification directed Telegram to remove and disable access to the channels "within three hours of the issue of this communication without vitiating the evidence in any manner".

According to the annexure attached to the notification, some channels contained more than 2,000 links associated with unauthorised distribution of films, web series and other digital entertainment content.

The action is based on Section 79(3)(b) of IT Act, which removes liability protection for intermediaries if they fail to act after receiving govt notice regarding unlawful content hosted on their platforms. Rule 3(1)(d) of IT Rules, 2021, requires intermediaries to remove or disable access to prohibited information upon notification by govt or a competent court.

Officials said the move forms part of a broader effort to curb online piracy and protect intellectual property rights of digital content producers and streaming platforms. In recent years, govt has increased the monitoring of online platforms.

Centre warns pharma cos against promoting weight-loss drugs among public through ads

Anuja.Jaiswal
@timesofindia.com

iStock
Authorities emphasised that obesity was a chronic metabolic condition requiring comprehensive management, and pharmaceutical therapy should not be portrayed in a way that undermines public health initiatives

New Delhi: The Centre has warned pharmaceutical companies against promoting prescription weight-loss GLP-1 drugs — popularly sold under brand names Ozempic, Wegovy and Mounjaro — through advertisements or "disease awareness" campaigns that indirectly encourage their use among the public.

In an advisory, Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation said it had come to its notice that some firms were engaging in direct or indirect promotional activities related to GLP-1 receptor agonists and similar prescription medicines used for obesity and metabolic conditions.

The regulator said such medicines could be prescribed only by registered medical practitioners and any attempt to promote them to the general public could attract action under the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945.

The advisory cautioned companies against advertisements that exaggerate their therapeutic benefits, guarantee weight loss or encourage demand for drug therapy while downplaying lifestyle changes such as diet, exercise and behavioural interventions.

The health authorities emphasised that obesity was a chronic metabolic condition requiring comprehensive management, including lifestyle measures, and pharmaceutical therapy should not be portrayed in a way that undermines public health initiatives promoting physical activity and healthy diet.

The regulator also said that promotional campaigns presented as "awareness initiatives" but functioning as surrogate advertisements for prescription medicines would be treated as misleading marketing practices.

Drug manufacturers, importers and marketing authorisation holders have been asked to strictly comply with Drugs and Cosmetics Act and related rules. The regulator directed companies to ensure patient information leaflets and prescribing information clearly display authorised contact details and grievance mechanisms. Firms have also been asked to follow ethical marketing practices and submit risk-management plans.

The advisory has been circulated to all stakeholders, including Advertising Standards Council of India, for compliance.